RESEARCH

Steiner Schools in England

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department for
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The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education and Skills.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) commissioned a research project to comprehensively map Steiner school education in England, identify and investigate good practice, explore the differences and commonalities between Steiner schools and the maintained sector, identify the scope for the two sectors to learn from each other, explore the potential challenges to Steiner schools entering the maintained sector and make recommendations. The results of the project are intended to inform Government policy in England and help enhance co-operation and mutual learning between Steiner and mainstream schooling.

1.2 Background

Steiner school education provides an alternative approach to mainstream education in many countries. The Steiner schools in England are all independent schools and, hence, do not receive state funding. Education in Steiner schools is based on Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy and has a particular view of what constitutes learning, achievement and educational development.

1.3 Methodology

The project's methods comprised:

- a literature review with the principal aim of systematically reviewing published empirical research evidence on Steiner education based on a search of English language data bases
- interviews and meetings with key national Steiner informants
- a survey of Steiner schools in England, using on-site, structured interviews wherever possible: 21 of the 23 Steiner schools participated
- a survey of Steiner teachers: 184 completed questionnaires were returned, a response rate of just under half
- case studies of good practice: seven schools were selected for case study.

1.4 Findings from the literature review

- The research studies reviewed give a cumulative sense of a positive relationship between Steiner schools and learning, achievement and pupils' development of academic, creative, social and other capabilities important in the holistic growth of the person. The research evidence has to be interpreted with caution, however. Studies are often small scale and conducted in different cultural and national contexts that may affect the confidence with which findings can be generalised to other settings. Overall, there is a lack of rigorous research on the impact of Steiner school education on learning and achievement and little research which systematically compares Steiner and mainstream schools.

- The research studies reviewed also give a cumulative impression that Steiner schools tend to create positive and mutually supportive relationships in schools. However, as with the research on learning and achievement, studies tend to be small scale and there are insufficient rigorous comparative investigations of Steiner and mainstream schools. More research into Steiner schools in different contexts, and in comparison with community-orientated mainstream schools, is required to investigate further to what extent mutually supportive and caring relationships are a distinctive feature of Steiner education and explore how this comes about.
- A defining feature of Steiner education is the attention given to rhythm, rituals, symbols and ceremony, and the close attention given to everyone (including pupils) as individuals and as members of the community.
- The question of Steiner education and social justice issues – how it affects and approaches gender, cultural diversity, ethnic minorities etc. – is little researched.
- There are both differences and commonalities between Steiner and mainstream education. Differences include the focus on rhythm, rituals, symbols and ceremony in Steiner schools. Research studies have given less attention to investigating how far the philosophical basis for Steiner education (anthroposophy) is integral to the distinctiveness of Steiner education and what implications this has for mutual sharing and learning with mainstream education. Commonalities include an interest in holistic education and certain pedagogical themes, of which child developmentalism would be by far the most significant.
- No research was found on Steiner schools entering the public sector, nor on the process and outcomes of mutual sharing of practices between Steiner and mainstream schools. Both of these topics would benefit from systematic investigation, through action research and other methods.

1.5 Findings from the survey and case studies

The survey of Steiner schools and the case studies produced an overview of Steiner school education in England and provided the basis for exploring commonalities and differences between Steiner and maintained school education.

Commonalities and differences

Curriculum. Steiner education includes all the recognised subjects of the National Curriculum in England. Aspects distinctive to, or differences of emphasis in, Steiner education, include:

- teaching science through observation, imagination and the engagement of pupils' artistic faculties
- the greater attention given to modern foreign languages
- the emphasis on crafts, handwork, and practical activities
- the introduction of ICT when pupils reach the age of 13 or 14
- the importance attached to art and the development of aesthetic sensibilities
- inclusion of subjects unique to Steiner education, such as eurythmy
- the nature and significance of religious education lessons.

National tests. National tests are regarded as taking time away from the teaching of the Steiner curriculum. Assessment is integral to the Steiner approach and national tests are not necessarily seen as helpful. Pupils are, however, entered for pragmatic reasons and there is evidence of good pass rates.

Pedagogy. Both the mainstream and Steiner education traditions in England regard the individual child as important and schools as having a part to play in development of the whole child. Steiner education takes a particular perspective and entails a set of practices which relate to each other in order to give Steiner schools their character. These include:

- the role of the teacher understood as a sacred task in helping each child's soul and spirit grow, which underpins the commitment to each pupil and is the basis of sustaining the class teacher-pupil relationship over eight years
- curriculum and pedagogy designed to be in harmony with the different phases of development children are believed to go through
- curriculum activities undertaken for their value in developing the child's soul qualities, not for their potential future utility
- structure of the daily two hour main lesson, followed by four or five subject lessons for all age groups
- governing of pedagogy by a strong sense of rhythm that is pervasive throughout the schools
- use of distinctive pedagogical practices, such as child studies and class studies and meditative picturing of the child
- emphasis on whole class teaching and the artistry, autonomy and authority of the individual teacher
- emphasis on the authority of adults as a necessary precursor to the attainment of freedom by the pupil on reaching maturity.

Special Educational Needs (SEN). Steiner schools provide both conventional forms of provision and others that are unique to Steiner education. Steiner-specific methods of SEN would include curative eurythmy, which is claimed to be especially therapeutic in its effects and is a development of the art of movement (eurythmy) developed by Rudolf Steiner.

Educational philosophy. Steiner education is grounded in the philosophy developed by Rudolf Steiner, known as anthroposophy, and this philosophy informs and guides the education. The principles of anthroposophy are based on a particular understanding of child development, and are the foundation of other concepts integral to Steiner schools' pedagogy such as willing/feeling/thinking, the role of the teacher, the emphasis on valuing childhood, and the collegial running of the school. The Steiner school curriculum is not designed to guide and encourage young people into becoming adherents of anthroposophy. Rather, Steiner education and the maintained sector share the goal of enabling pupils to grow into adults capable of thinking for themselves and making independent judgements.

Leadership and management. The research confirmed that Steiner schools do not have a formal hierarchy amongst teachers and that responsibility in the vast majority of schools belongs to the college of teachers which is intended to embody and develop the spiritual life of the school, as well as to exercise responsibility for the school's educational activities and management. There is a contrast between the non-hierarchical arrangements of Steiner schools and the traditional hierarchy of maintained schools. However, it is important to recognise that the collegial approach of Steiner education is in keeping with some important trends in the maintained sector, such as the interest in developing more distributed and flexible styles of leadership.

Parental involvement. Parents/carers support Steiner schools in many ways which are common to them and the maintained sector (through fund-raising and Parent-Teacher Associations, for example). The expected commitment of parents/carers, however, is greater in some regards – for example through family support for the Steiner philosophy and ethos and in numerous ways that help maintain schools which are financially constrained.

Teachers. A striking contrast with the maintained sector is the lower pay and less favourable conditions that Steiner teachers enjoy. The expected level of contribution to fund raising or the maintenance of buildings is often higher than in maintained schools. In spite of this, however, staffing levels are significantly more generous than in maintained schools, particularly regarding the deployment of specialist expertise across the 7 – 14 age range. High proportions of teachers in Steiner schools do not have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) which is an essential requirement to teach in the maintained sector. The majority hold a teaching qualification issued by a Steiner teacher training programme that would not be recognised by the DfES.

1. 6 Recommendations

Scope for mutual sharing and learning between Steiner and maintained schools

Informed by the results of the literature review and the research findings, opportunities to facilitate collaboration and mutual learning between the two sectors are identified, and recommendations made to enhance the scope for such collaboration and mutual learning.

Adoption of Steiner practices in mainstream education has to be approached with caution. Transferring practices between schools of differing philosophies is neither straightforward nor in all cases appropriate, and may not achieve the expected consequences because they are removed from the supportive school context in which they originate. The point equally applies to transfer of practice in the other direction – from mainstream to Steiner education. Having said that, there are themes to be found in both Steiner and mainstream education, in relation to concepts such as rhythm, narrative and holistic education, relational consciousness and the capacity for spiritual awareness and distributed leadership. The potential exists to utilise such themes as bridges to facilitate dialogue and interaction between the Steiner and maintained sectors.

Recommendation 1: Government, local education authorities (LEAs), maintained and Steiner schools, and the UK Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship (SWSF) to develop workable ways of exploring mutual sharing and learning between the Steiner and maintained sectors which

- take full account of their different philosophical foundations
- acknowledge the challenges of transfer between schools with different educational philosophies
- utilise 'bridging themes' to facilitate dialogue and interaction between the two sectors.

There are a number of aspects of Steiner school practice that might readily inform good practice in maintained schools, whilst others might be more controversial but could be the basis for profitable dialogue.

Recommendation 2: Government, LEAs, maintained and Steiner schools and the SWSF to explore the potential of the following to inform practice in maintained schools:

- early introduction and approach to modern foreign languages
- the combination of class and subject teaching for younger children
- development of speaking and listening through an emphasis on oral work
- the development of a good pace in lessons through an emphasis on rhythm
- the emphasis on child development in guiding the curriculum and examinations
- the approach to art and creativity
- the attention given to teachers' reflective activity and heightened awareness (in collective child study for example)
- collegial structure of leadership and management, including collegial study.

There are aspects of mainstream education which could inform good practice in Steiner schools.

Recommendation 3: Government and agencies such as the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), LEAs, maintained and Steiner schools, the SWSF and Steiner teacher trainers to explore the potential of the following maintained sector practices to inform practice in Steiner schools:

- mainstream management skills and ways of improving organisational and administrative efficiency
- classroom management in the maintained sector

- working with older children in maintained secondary schools
- assessment and record keeping in the maintained sector.

Transferring practices is not the only aspect of mutual sharing and learning where there may be potential benefits. There is much scope for mutual learning and stimulation of fresh thinking about existing practices, amongst both Steiner and mainstream teachers, through dialogue involving both groups and greater mutual understanding.

Recommendation 4: Government, LEAs, maintained and Steiner schools and the SWSF to promote opportunities for professional interaction and dialogue between Steiner and mainstream educators.

The potential for sharing effective Steiner practice needs to be informed by evidence of their benefits (and possible shortcomings) and greater understanding of how they work, and of actual experience in their transfer to or adaptation in mainstream education.

Recommendation 5: Government, LEAs, agencies such as the TTA and National College for School Leadership (NCSL), maintained and Steiner schools, and the SWSF to promote and support academic and practitioner research which investigates

- the evidence base concerning Steiner education
- the relative effectiveness of Steiner and maintained sector practices, and
- the transfer to or adaptation within mainstream education of Steiner practices.

Entering the maintained sector

Based on the findings of this study, some of the most important challenges are identified.in the event of Steiner schools becoming part of the state-funded, maintained sector in England. Initiatives are recommended that could be taken to address these challenges.

Admissions

Challenge: bringing Steiner schools' admissions processes into line with those in the maintained sector

Recommendation 6: Steiner schools to review their admissions procedures and criteria with a view to ensuring that they are transparent and open to all pupils in accordance with regulations which apply to the maintained sector, and to examine the implications for their schools of consequent changes in admissions procedures and criteria.

Curriculum

Challenge: providing for sufficient flexibility in a system that prescribes a National Curriculum

Recommendation 7:.Government to facilitate disapplication of Steiner schools from the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Challenge: recognition and acceptance of the distinctive character of Steiner schools' religious education

Recommendation 8: Government and LEAs to give specific consideration to the nature of religious education; Government to establish if action in relation to the law and regulations concerning religious education in maintained schools would be needed to ensure that religious education in Steiner schools could retain its distinctive character.

National tests and assessment

Challenge: incorporating Steiner education's different approach to assessment and examinations

Recommendation 9: Government and LEAs to ensure that they, and agencies such as Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), are informed by a developed understanding and appreciation, in the full context of Steiner education, of how Steiner schools assess progress and facilitate pupils' learning and of other distinctive aspects of Steiner schools (Recommendations 12 and 18); this to be developed internally, through opportunities for elected representatives and officials concerned with Steiner education to build up such understanding and appreciation, and/or facilitated though external advisors.

Recommendation 10: Government and LEAs to support the development and acceptance of alternative ways by which pupils leaving Steiner schools can demonstrate capability for further study and employment, building on current practice.

Recommendation 11: Government and LEAs, in co-operation with the SWSF, to develop appropriate ways of identifying and comparing Steiner schools' educational outcomes.

Pedagogy

Challenge: openness towards unconventional modes of assessment which inform pedagogical practice in Steiner schools

Recommendation 12: Government and LEAs to ensure that they, and other relevant agencies, are informed by a developed understanding and appreciation of Steiner schools' unconventional pedagogical practices, this to be an integral part of Recommendation 9.

Challenge: accommodating the later start to formal schooling in Steiner schools

Recommendation 13: Government to review and address implications arising from the later start to formal schooling in Steiner schools.

Challenge: enhancing the capacity for self-critical review of Steiner education in dialogue with mainstream education

Recommendation 14: Steiner schools to ensure that professional development enables teachers and other relevant staff to become better acquainted with developments in theory, research, policies and practices in mainstream education and be prepared to review Steiner educational theories and practices in light of this.

Challenge: balancing teacher accountability and the authority and autonomy of the teacher in Steiner schools

Recommendation 15: Steiner schools to promote continual improvement of arrangements to facilitate mutual responsibility amongst teachers for observation and improvement of classroom teaching practices, this to include

- evaluation of innovations being tried by some Steiner schools
- sharing of findings and experience amongst Steiner schools concerning these
- enhancing awareness of maintained sector practices and adapting these for Steiner schools as appropriate.

Steiner educational philosophy

Challenge: promoting understanding of Steiner education and its foundation in a particular philosophy (anthroposophy)

Recommendation 16: Government and LEAs to undertake or otherwise facilitate a programme of action aimed at promoting an informed understanding of Steiner education and the educational philosophy in which it is grounded, and to include as a component of this, communication of appropriate information for parents/carers so that they are able to make an informed choice of school where a maintained Steiner school is an option.

Recommendation 17: Steiner schools to devise and carry though a strategy for enhancing understanding amongst the general public and particular stakeholders (such as parents/carers, LEA officers and mainstream teachers) of Steiner education, including its foundation in anthroposophy and why it is not right to see it as a faith or dogma.

Leadership, management and accountability

Challenge: finding ways of enabling the Steiner schools' collegial system of leadership and management to work effectively in a maintained system which has traditionally required a single organisational head

Recommendation 18: Government and LEAs to ensure that they, and other agencies, including the NCSL, are informed by a developed understanding and appreciation of Steiner schools' collegial structure of leadership and management, this to be an integral part of Recommendation 9.

Recommendation 19: Government, the NCSL and LEAs to consider how they might adapt their arrangements and expectations for working with schools in order to accommodate collegially run schools.

Recommendation 20: Steiner schools to ensure they have leadership and management arrangements which facilitate efficient interaction with external contacts (this can be facilitated by drawing on and evaluating innovations already introduced by Steiner schools).

Challenge: the need for new skills and capacity for change in Steiner schools

Recommendation 21: Steiner schools to identify in what ways leadership and management arrangements and the skills and capabilities available in schools need to be improved in order to develop and sustain a continuing capacity for change, and to devise a strategy for bringing about these improvements.

Recommendation 22: Steiner schools to give attention to what changes might be needed in their leadership and management arrangements and the skills and capabilities available in schools in order to forge and sustain new multiple external relationships and partnerships.

Recommendation 23: Steiner schools to review, with an input from representatives of the maintained sector, where and how record keeping and accountability procedures would need to be improved.

Challenge: enhancing the accountability and transparency of Steiner education in appropriate ways

Recommendation 24: Government and LEAs to explore, in co-operation with the SWSF, different kinds of accountability procedures that meet the need for public accountability whilst not affecting the essential educational practices of Steiner schools.

Recommendation 25: Steiner schools to review, with an input from representatives of the maintained sector, where information about and accessibility to practices and procedures need to be improved so that they are as open and transparent as is expected in the maintained sector; the review also to make recommendations about research into Steiner education.

Teachers

Challenge: requirements for teachers' qualifications in maintained sector as relatively small proportions of staff in Steiner schools hold QTS

> **Recommendation 26:** Consideration to be given by Steiner schools, the SWSF and Government to commissioning an institution, such as the University of Plymouth, that has expertise in both Steiner and mainstream teacher training, to report on the equivalence of qualifications; Steiner schools to give consideration to increasing recruitment to their teacher training courses of teachers who already hold QTS from the maintained sector.

Accommodation

Challenge: assisting Steiner schools to find and obtain suitable sites/accommodation

> **Recommendation 27:** Government and, particularly, LEAs to provide support in finding and obtaining suitable sites/accommodation where appropriate.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Policy Context

Negotiations between the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship (SWSF) in the United Kingdom (UK) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) have been taking place for a number of years concerning the possible entry of Steiner schools[1] into the maintained sector. The idea of bringing Steiner schools into the public sector arises from a commitment to developing an education system characterised by both diversity and collaboration between schools and "where the expectation is that schools with markedly different philosophies and cultures… will learn from each other" (Woods and Woods 2002: 269). The DfES sees this as requiring "a decisive advance from the outdated argument about diversity versus uniformity" (DfES 2001: para 1.5). There are several, interrelated dimensions to the diversity policy[2]. These include:

- *freedom to excel through innovation and playing to strengths*, e.g. by giving successful schools "the freedom they need to excel and innovate" and freeing schools "from those conditions and regulatory requirements which… stand in the way of yet higher standards and further innovation" (DfES 2001: paras 1.6, 5.17).
- *collaboration and sharing*: Whilst a school's "main priority is to serve its pupils, their families and their community... we also want schools to contribute to the family of schools and to the development of the education system", so that schools "constantly learn from each other" (DfES 2001: paras 5.3, 5.6).
- *broadening of educational opportunities and choice*: "It is not only those pupils who attend a school with a centre of excellence who should be able to benefit from it" (DfES 2001: para 5.7).
- *tailored educational experience*: Networks of diverse and collaborating schools are better placed than any individual school to offer educational opportunities and choices which are suited to pupils' differentiated needs and preferences (DfES 2001, 2003).
- *inclusion*: Diversity is about "raising standards for every pupil" (DfES 2001: para 5.36).
- *stimulus from new entrants*: New providers, such as Academies[3], "can benefit pupils by bringing fresh ideas and perspectives and particular skills and expertise to schools" (DfES 2001: para 5.22).

Progress has been made towards enabling a Steiner school to be one such new entrant and become an Academy with public funding. The DfES is also seeking to facilitate a Steiner school becoming fully maintained.

[1] The terminology 'Steiner schools', 'Steiner education', etc, is used in this report. The terms 'Waldorf' or 'Steiner Waldorf' are other descriptions often used. In Appendix 3, the terminology used by authors of research publications is generally followed.
[2] These are discussed more fully in Woods et al. (2003).
[3] Academies are schools which are independently managed and have private sponsors, but are funded mainly by central government.

A series of popular misconceptions exist about Steiner schools[4]:

- Steiner schools are 'free schools' in which children can choose whether or not they attend lessons.
- There is no compulsory curriculum in Steiner schools.
- Steiner schools are elite, independent schools.
- Steiner schools are part of a religious cult that indoctrinates children in its beliefs.
- The Steiner curriculum is mostly art and therefore suitable for children who find a more traditional academic curriculum difficult.
- Steiner schools are the last refuge for children who have failed in other schools.

2.2 Background on Steiner Education

Steiner school education provides an alternative approach to mainstream education in many countries. Steiner schools are part of an international community of schools that provide a curriculum that puts into practice this approach. Steiner education is now described as the largest worldwide independent school movement. There are 870 schools globally in 60 countries[5], including most European countries, Australia, Canada, Egypt, India, Israel, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, South Africa, South America and the US[6].

The first Steiner school was founded in 1919 by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) to serve the children of employees at the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart. Education in Steiner schools, which is based on Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy, has a particular view of what constitutes learning, achievement and educational development. Any understanding of what counts as "valued learning" – "that which is learnt (including

[4] The existence of these as frequent misconceptions about Steiner education was confirmed by Steiner schools and other informants in this study.

[5] www.steinerwaldorfeurope.org (website of the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education), accessed 12th January 2005.

[6] **Distribution of schools in European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education**

	Schools*		Schools*
Austria	12	Netherlands	90
Belgium	19	Norway	35
Czech Republic	8	Russia	16
Denmark	18	Slovenia	1
Finland	21	Spain	2
France	12	Sweden	40
Germany	187	Switzerland	36
Hungary	18	United Kingdom and Ireland	31
Italy	21	North America**	140
Luxembourg	1		

* numbers of schools as at October 2003.

** North America is a member of the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education.

cognitive, affective and other aspects of learning) *and* which is felt or considered to be worthwhile and of benefit" (Woods and Woods 2002: 262) – is a normative position set in a framework of concepts and ideas about human beings and the world. In the case of Steiner education, this framework is the distinctive philosophy – known as anthroposophy – developed by Rudolf Steiner.

The premise from which Steiner education starts is that "each human being comprises body, soul and spirit" (Rawson and Richter 2000: 14). Education is meant to be part of the process whereby "the spiritual core of the person [strives] to come ever more fully to expression within and through the organism he or she has inherited and must individualise" (op. cit.: 7). To this end, the range of human faculties are awakened (cognitive, affective, creative, etc.) in a balanced way according to the anthroposophical model of human development. Integral to Steiner school education is encouragement of balanced growth towards "physical, behavioural, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual maturation" (op. cit.: 7). Steiner pedagogy recognises "willing" (the control of limbs and bodily movement), "feeling" (the affective domain of the aesthetic and emotional senses) and "thinking" (the cognitive domain of rational thought). Willing dominates pedagogy up to age seven when learning by imitation is very important. Between 7 and 14, children learn through their aesthetic senses, whilst from 14 upwards attention is given to the rapidly awakening senses of reason.

The Steiner curriculum is based on what Rudolf Steiner indicated would be appropriate for children of each age in accordance with his view of child development. It has evolved over the years through a testing in practice of this principle and is documented in publications such as Rawson and Richter (2000). Ideally, pupils follow the curriculum from early years through Classes 1 to 12. Formal learning begins at age 7. Before then, children are said to learn "primarily through imitation and play", and what they need according to Steiner principles is "a secure, caring and structured environment where activities occur in a meaningful context" (Rawson and Richter 2000: 16). Because of this later start, compared with maintained education in England, Steiner classes do not correspond with years in the maintained sector. The equivalent ages and maintained school years are:

Steiner	Age	Maintained	
Class 1	6-7	Year 2	
Class 2	7-8	Year 3	
Class 3	8-9	Year 4	
Class 4	9-10	Year 5	Lower School
Class 5	10-11	Year 6	
Class 6	11-12	Year 7	
Class 7	12-13	Year 8	
Class 8	13-14	Year 9	
Class 9	14-15	Year 10	
Class 10	15-16	Year 11	Upper School
Class 11	16-17	Year 12	
Class 12	17-18	Year 13	

The intention in Steiner schools is that the same class teacher stays with the same group of children from Class 1 to Class 8 for lower school. In the upper school (corresponding to the latter part of Key Stage 4 and above in maintained schools), a class guardian assumes the former pastoral and guiding role of the class teacher. Lesson delivery is, as in maintained schools, by subject specialists. Unlike maintained schools, a subject teacher (who could also be a class guardian) will take a block of daily lessons on a given topic, for example, the development of architecture (see "main lesson" below).

Possibly the most distinctive single element of Steiner education is the two hour main lesson that is held at the beginning of each day. Fundamentally, Rudolf Steiner established a pattern for the whole period of Class 1 to Class 12. This is a main lesson up until morning break, followed by usually two subject lessons before lunch and then two further subject lessons after lunch. All classes broadly follow this pattern, whether the pupils are 6 or 16 years of age. The purpose of the main lesson is to allow sustained concentration on a topic for a significant block of time – ideally one month. An appreciation of the significance of this structure is crucial to an understanding of how the class teacher system really works. In the youngest classes, children are more likely to have their own teacher for some or all of the subject lessons, but unlike maintained primary schools, there is a very clear complementary timetable of subject teaching throughout the main primary years that continues into upper school (Classes 9-12).

Another distinctive characteristic of Steiner education is the absence of a formal hierarchy amongst teachers. Responsibility for leadership belongs to a college of teachers which Rudolf Steiner intended should run the school as a 'republican academy' (Gladstone 1997). A central responsibility of that leadership is to embody and develop the spiritual life of the school, as well as to exercise responsibility for its educational activities and management.

An integral feature of Steiner schooling is the importance attached to family support for the education of the child, and the importance of adult learning and development in the wider school community. The schools need to explain their distinctive philosophy to parents and do so through means such as evening lectures or informative articles in newsletters. Parents are frequently invited to the regular festivals which form part of the work of the schools and where they can see their children's work. As with maintained schools, there are regular information evenings and teacher-patent consultation events. Some of the schools offer classes in art, craft or other aspects of the distinctive Steiner approach from which adults can benefit. Many parents are also significantly involved in the running of the schools, perhaps as trustees, but often in a practical sense including the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings.

A number of terms, concepts and practices are distinctive to Steiner education and need to be briefly defined, as they will arise in later reporting and discussion of findings. These are as follows:

- Child study: a review of a child who needs special consideration, because of learning/behavioural difficulties, special qualities, etc., or characterises a particular age or stage of development.
- Class study: a review of a whole class in terms of an aspect of attainment or social dynamics.
- College of teachers: the body of teachers responsible for carrying the educational ethos of the school and for all areas usually in the remit of the headteacher in the maintained sector.
- Teachers' meetings: other regular meetings of teachers.
- Three-fold social order: three areas of social life which Rudolf Steiner saw as needing to be in harmonious development and provide the basis for the management structure of Steiner schools – these are the economic sphere, the sphere of rights and politics and the cultural/spiritual sphere.
- Eurythmy: an art of movement originated and developed by Rudolf Steiner which is meant to help children develop harmoniously with mind, body and soul; curative eurythmy is a development of eurythmy which is claimed to be especially therapeutic in its effects
- 'Inner work' of the teacher: activity by the teacher to deepen his or her understanding and insight into child development through study, meditation, artistic activity, etc.
- Meditative picturing of the child: reflection by a teacher on a child, perhaps during the evening, calling to mind significant signs or events that might lead to a reappraisal of the relationship or pedagogic approach.
- Spiral curriculum: the same subjects are revisited as the children grow older, but at different levels according to Rudolf Steiner's principles of child development.
- Rhythm: principles which give shape to and determine the pace of lessons, based on the idea that there needs to be a variety of types of activity in tune with mental and bodily rhythms of the children. Rhythmic shape is found within lessons and also over longer periods of two to three days that give shape to the overall teaching approach; also the teaching of material such as multiplication tables through the use of rhythmic movements.
- Willing/thinking/feeling: Rudolf Steiner referred to 'forces' in the developing body. The will 'forces' concern the control of limbs, feeling is related to the aesthetic or affective function, and thinking refers to the rational, cognitive function. Willing/thinking/feeling is present in most activities and all ages, but development of willing dominates in the early years, feeling in the middle years and thinking in the upper years.
- Temperaments: psychological dispositions identified in antiquity but revived by Rudolf Steiner. Choleric children are risk takers, phlegmatics take things calmly, melancholics are sensitive or introverted, and sanguines take things lightly or flippantly. There temperaments are considered important in grouping children and identifying the most relevant teaching approaches.
- Body/soul/spirit: the components of each person. The physical body is the material dimension of the person. 'Soul' and 'spirit' have specific, technical meanings in Steiner's thought. In the soul, "the human being builds an inner world of personal experience which relates the individual to the outer world and

expresses itself in the form of thinking, feeling and willing" (Rawson and Richter 2000: 14). In spirit, a dimension is revealed "higher than both of the others" (ibid) through which the person "steps… out of himself" (Steiner 2005: 20) and perceives the deeper meaning and significance of the world and nature.

2.3 Steiner Schools in England

For the purposes of this study, Steiner schools comprise schools in England which are members of or sponsored by the UK SWSF. At the time of the study, these numbered 23. Hence, kindergartens, for example, are not included in the study; nor are Steiner schools in the rest of the UK since the responsibilities of the DfES extend to England only.

The Steiner schools in England are all independent schools and, hence, do not receive state funding. However they also differ from other independent schools as they follow an alternative educational approach and do not provide mainstream education as the majority of independent schools.

Steiner schools range from quite large, well established schools offering the full age range from Kindergarten to Year 13 to very small 'new' schools that are provisionally sponsored by the SWSF who provide them with mentors. Ideally, a new school aims to begin with a Kindergarten and expand vertically, adding a new class each year as the first cohort of children progresses. A significant obstacle that any growing school needs to overcome is that of opening an upper school. Upper schools in the Steiner system coincide with Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) and above in the maintained system. Most schools are able to accommodate expansion to the end of the class teacher years (Class 8), which coincides with the end of Key Stage 3 in the maintained system (Year 9). Further upward expansion presents significant difficulties, partly to do with the need to employ more subject specialist teachers, but also to do with the availability of land and premises. For this reason, there is no simple linear correlation between a school's age and state of growth. Schools in urban areas can face particular challenges in this regard.

Broadly, three phases of founding of Steiner schools in England can be traced, and these have some relationship to the size and scope of the schools:

(a) 'mature' schools founded during the 1920s and 30s in response to the interest in educational innovation and the original ideals of the Stuttgart school post World War I
(b) 'second wave' schools founded during the 1970s, often in response to the social ideals of the time such as greater freedom
(c) 'youthful' schools founded during the last 10 years, often in response to parental dissatisfaction with the perceived level of testing and stress in maintained schools.

The schools occupy a wide range of premises. Some are in purpose built modern buildings. Others have adapted and extended large houses, very much in the tradition of

independent schools. Yet others have resorted to ingenious adaptations of premises ranging from barns to disused churches.

The mature schools that were established in the first half of the last century were founded by teachers for pedagogical reasons. Schools established since then have tended to be founded by parents whose agenda can often be reactive to events and policies in maintained schools.

2.4 Aims and Rationale of the Project

The purpose of this project was to study Steiner schools in England and to place the interpretation of the findings in the context of a systematic examination of published research on Steiner school education. The results of the project are intended to help enhance understanding of Steiner education to challenge common perceptions that currently hinder co-operation and mutual learning between Steiner and mainstream schooling. Its aims were to:

i. comprehensively map Steiner school education in England, in terms of Steiner school philosophy; curriculum provision; approach to assessment; pedagogy; special educational needs provision and inclusion; leadership and management; parental involvement; teachers and other teaching staff
ii. identify and investigate good practice beneficial to pupil achievement and explore the scope for incorporating elements of Steiner curriculum and/or pedagogy into maintained schools
iii. explore the differences and commonalities between Steiner schools and the maintained sector and identify the scope for the two sectors to learn from each other
iv. explore the potential challenges to Steiner schools entering the maintained sector
v. make recommendations concerning the extent to which, and how, these challenges could be overcome and collaboration and mutual learning between the two sectors facilitated.

The project began on 12th July 2004 and was completed by 31st March 2005.

3. METHODOLOGY

A number of methods of investigation were deployed in order to address the project's aims.

3.1 Literature Review

A key aim of the literature review was to identify and examine literature that would enable research evidence to be reviewed on the impact of Steiner school provision on learning and pupil achievement and help identify examples of good practice in Steiner education. This involved a systematic review, evaluating the quality of evidence and analysis in these publications. Examining this literature, in conjunction with other relevant publications and sources (e.g. websites), was intended to help throw light on the issues detailed in the project's aims.

In summary, the literature review comprised:

i. a systematic review of reported empirical research on Steiner schooling and learning
ii. perusal of other relevant literature and sources[7].

The publications for review were generated by means of a systematic search of a number of sources of research literature. Details are given in Appendix 1. Electronic data bases were searched – including the British and Australian Education Indexes from 1976 and ERIC from 1966 – as well as other sources. The review was limited to English language literature and sources. The prime focus of the search was to identify and obtain publications/papers which report empirical research on Steiner school education (subsequently referred to as 'empirical research publications'). A filtering process was applied in order to reduce the large numbers of potential publications generated by the search and to ensure that the review concentrated on those of relevance to its aims. In consequence, the search excluded the many articles, books and other publications and papers about Steiner school education which do not base their discussions and analyses on original research evidence.

For the purposes of the review a protocol was designed to ensure that each publication was assessed against a standard set of questions (Appendix 2). In total, 28 publications reporting empirical research were reviewed (Appendix 3) [8]. Publications were allocated amongst the research team, each team member completing a protocol for each of their

[7] These included documentation and publications produced by the SWSF, key publications not reporting empirical research generated by the systematic literature search, information provided by interviews with key national Steiner informants (Section 3.2), and UK and international websites on Steiner education.
[8] This excludes three publications which, in the time and with the resources available, it proved impossible to obtain: Set of research papers from the Waldorf High School Research Project, on CD ROM, published by Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, 2003; Ph.D. Thesis, The moral reasoning of high school seniors from diverse educational settings, Christine Anne Hether, Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center, 2001; thesis investigating progress to tertiary studies and the attitudes of students, Bill Wood, University of South Australia.

allocated publications. The completed protocols were then circulated amongst the team and the emerging findings discussed collectively. One team member prepared a draft account of the literature review which was circulated to other team members and refined in light of their comments and amendments.

3.2 Interviews and Meetings with Key National Steiner Informants

Interviews with selected national Steiner informants (four in all) were undertaken in order to provide background information, assist in identifying issues relevant to addressing the project's aims and inform the development of the survey schedule. Meeting senior figures in the SWSF was also seen as assisting in laying the groundwork for access negotiations with individual Steiner schools. Interviews were conducted with the following[9]:

- Chair/Director of the SWSF and European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education
- Leader, Steiner/Waldorf Teacher Training Programme, Emerson College
- Representative of the London Steiner Training Centre
- Founder/member of the Steiner Dyslexia Association.

Subject experts and leading national figures in areas such as special educational needs were also interviewed during the course of case studies of schools. The outcomes of these interviews were used to formulate and validate the definitions of good practice that are illustrated in the vignettes presented in this report.

In addition, the research team attended meetings of the SWSF which included representatives from Steiner schools in the UK and Ireland during which the aims of the research were explained, comments and questions were invited and initial research contacts were established with schools in England.

3.3 Survey of Steiner schools in England

The principal purpose of the survey was to obtain data that would provide the main source for mapping Steiner school education in England. It was also envisaged that these data would provide insights into differences between Steiner and maintained schools, contribute to the identification of good practice (providing the basis for selection of case studies), and contribute to understanding the potential challenges to Steiner schools entering the maintained sector.

The aim was to conduct the survey by means of on-site, structured interviews using a schedule of questions. Visiting schools, rather than utilising self-completion questionnaires or telephone interviews, was the planned strategy because this:

- offered the best way of establishing a rapport and constructive research relationship with each school, given the length and complexity of the schedule

[9] An interview was sought with a representative of the Faculty of Education, Plymouth University, concerned with degrees in Steiner education offered there. However, it did not prove possible to arrange this.

and so as to gain the necessary trust to answer questions, some of which may be seen as sensitive
- enabled answers to be placed in the context of each school, and
- enabled collection of data through the researchers' observations and perusal and collection of relevant documentation.

Development of a survey schedule and the approach to conducting the survey were informed by data from the interviews with key national informants and meetings with the SWSF. The survey schedule was extensively piloted over a two-day period with experienced personnel from one of the Steiner schools in England and changes made as a result. The final version of the schedule (Appendix 4) was lengthy and contained some sections which were most appropriately answered by experienced teachers and other parts that could be completed by school administrators. Part of the schedule[10] was, therefore, designed so that it could be left with the school for completion by a school administrator.

Survey schedules were completed by 21 schools out of the total 23 Steiner schools in England. Twenty-two originally agreed to take part. However, one school which had agreed to participate was unable to, within the timescale of the study, due to the particular circumstances of the school. One school declined to take part, offering no reason. Members of the research team undertook fieldwork visits to a total of 15 schools, each visit lasting half to a full day, with team members keeping detailed notes. The full schedule had been sent in advance. In most cases, the sections to be answered by experienced teachers were completed by more than one experienced teacher at each school – sometimes prior to the field visit, using the visit to go over the completed schedule; sometimes during the field visit with a researcher present. In all cases, respondents (both in writing on the schedule and in conversation) placed replies in context and took the opportunity to elaborate and explain the subtleties and complexities necessary to appreciate and understand replies given on the schedule. Field visits also included opportunities to be shown around the school, to observe lessons (for varying periods of time, according to the schedule of the visit), to talk to a variety of teachers and other staff and, in the case of one school, to visit the Camphill Community in which it is situated.

Due to varying circumstances, the remaining six participating schools agreed to self-complete the schedule in place of a fieldwork visit by a member or members of the research team. These schools were offered the opportunity to discuss the schedule over the telephone with one of the researchers.

All fieldwork visits and the bulk of survey schedules were completed in November and December 2004. Two schedules were completed and returned in January 2005.

Copies of school policies on assessment, special educational needs (SEN), admissions criteria, and complaints procedures, were requested. In total, 38 policy documents were obtained: on assessment (from three schools); on SEN (from 11 schools); on admissions criteria (from 12 schools); and on complaints procedures (from 12 schools).

[10] Please see Appendix C of the survey schedule reproduced in Appendix 4 of this report.

Where possible other documentation, such as parents' and staff handbooks, was collected from schools. Websites of all 20 schools which had a website were examined. Information from these sources was used to assist the survey and analysis of data.

Data from survey questions with fixed options were analysed using SPSS software. Responses to open-ended questions were summarised and stored electronically in Word files. Other data – including researchers' notes, additional written replies by teachers on the schedules, and policy documents – were analysed qualitatively to supplement and illuminate quantitative data.

One of the outcomes of piloting the survey schedule was a decision to carry out a survey of Steiner teachers. The purpose of the Steiner teachers' survey was to learn more about teachers' views on entering the maintained sector and the potential for mutual learning between Steiner schools and the maintained sector. All teachers at the 21 participating schools were invited to complete a one-page questionnaire[11]. A total of 184 completed teacher questionnaires were returned (from teachers in 20 schools). The response rate was approximately 46%[12]. The response rate fluctuated amongst the 20 schools from which completed teacher questionnaires were received, from 100% down to 9%. Data were analysed using SPSS software, except for open-ended questions which were analysed manually using analytical charts. Findings are reported in Section 5.10.

3.4 Case Studies of Good Practice

The principal aim of the case studies was to identify and report on good practice in the Steiner schools. It is not always easy to define good practice, still less to measure it. In considering how Steiner and mainstream schools might work together, there is a need to reconcile differing views of what constitutes good practice, and to negotiate difficulties that might arise through objections to the notion that educational outcomes can always be reduced to something measurable. Steiner education, with its emphasis on the development of the human person, views the emphasis in mainstream education on quantified, summative results such as national tests and examinations with suspicion. At the same time, mainstream education is aware of its responsibilities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Where Ofsted have inspected Steiner schools there has usually been recognition of strength in this area.

One meaning for the term "good practice" which provided a useful pointer to its operation in this study is "practice which is professionally judged to be effective but which may require further evidence and validation" (Woods and Cribb 2001: 81). In keeping with this definition, good practice has been taken to be practice

[11] This is Appendix B of the survey schedule which is reproduced in Appendix 4 of this report.
[12] This is based on returns from 16 schools (156 questionnaires from 338 teachers) where we have data from the survey schedule on numbers of teachers at each school.

- which is perceived as successful by professional Steiner educators in terms of Steiner educational principles and

- for which there is some *prima facie* evidence (from the survey, literature review, and/or interviews with key national informants) of effectiveness in generating learning and pupil achievement relevant to educational aims in the maintained sector.

The identification of such practice required some exercise of judgement in relation to what was beneficial to pupils, owing to differing priorities held by Steiner and mainstream professionals. The team were careful, during this process, to capture and portray Steiner education in its own terms. Whilst looking for prima facie evidence of effectiveness in generating learning and pupil achievement relevant to educational aims in the maintained sector, researchers were also alert to the possibilities that Steiner education might embrace valid aims that were not much considered in the maintained sector, or that priorities between the two sectors might differ. The team aimed to present a picture that (a) would allow Steiner education to be fairly judged on its own merits and (b) allow a useful comparison between the two sectors that highlighted similarities and differences without prejudice to the practice of either.

In the first instance, this required the team to negotiate with Steiner educators in order to identify those elements of their practice which they considered effective in achieving their aims. This was done through the survey visits where informants in schools discussed with a researcher the accumulating responses to the survey schedules. The emergent ideas were tested against data from key national informants and the literature review. Many of the Steiner teachers spoken to by researchers initially took for granted aspects of practice which the research team, as outsiders, considered potentially good. In the second instance, this required the team to find evidence of the operation of the elements of good practice. This was done through classroom observation and discussion with teachers of the observed events.

The case studies began with data collection by members of the research team during the fieldwork visits to 15 schools to complete the survey schedule. As noted, during these survey visits, conversation between researcher(s) and key members of school staff allowed significant further exploration of the survey questions and extensive field notes were taken to supplement the survey questions. The researchers were shown round the schools and allowed access to all relevant, available documentation. As a result of this process, some elements of good practice began to be identified and these were tested out through serial iteration as the programme of survey visits to schools proceeded. Finally, these records were discussed with a key national informant who was able to comment on their validity and appropriateness.

From the 15 schools visited, a selection of seven was made for further case study visits focusing on classroom observation. During these visits, a researcher was attached to a

class for a whole day, or in some cases, for two whole days[13]. In one school, the researcher spent a day with a subject teacher. Extensive notes were taken during lessons using a time frame supplemented by analytical coding that corresponded to the good practice elements previously identified. The notes were analysed by the researcher at the end of each day and a series of questions for teachers generated through this analysis. The teachers were then interviewed and given the opportunity to answer the questions and add any further comments or observations that they wished to include in order to make their practice clear.

The selection criteria for the final seven schools were:

- the desire to cover a representative spread of schools in terms of size (i.e. age range covered as well as total number on role) and 'maturity' (i.e. years of development since founding)

- the desire to cover a representative spread of location ranging from inner city to rural

- the need to observe, as far as possible, every age group of children

- the need to observe, as far as possible, each area of the curriculum.

Through a process of negotiation with schools, the selection made consisted of a representation of all of these kinds of school as follows:

- two large, 'mature' schools, offering the full curriculum up to age 18/19, one on the outskirts of a city, the other in a more rural area

- a moderately large 'mature' school offering a curriculum up to GCSE and situated in an area formerly characterised by heavy industry

- a well established urban school, offering a curriculum to Class 8 and aiming to expand further

- an inner city school, currently offering a curriculum to Class 6 and with plans to grow to Class 8

- a new school in a rural area, established to Class 5 (end of Key Stage 2) and hoping to acquire new premises in order to expand

- a very new rural school, seeking to establish itself.

[13] The case study instruments were first piloted at a Steiner school and refined in the light of the experience gained.

The method of reporting the case studies is first to give a brief, theoretical description of the practice, followed by an articulation of the claims that might be made by Steiner educators that it is good practice[14]. This is then followed by brief vignettes that illustrate the teaching and learning observed on which these claims are made. These vignettes do not necessarily provide hard and conclusive evidence that the practice is effective and are not intended to do so. Their purpose is, rather, to illustrate practice more fully and allow the reader to make his or her own judgements.

[14] Case studies of good practice were investigated for all areas of Steiner education mapped by the study (curriculum, pedagogy, etc.) except for teachers (which concerns teacher qualifications, conditions and so on).

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section concentrates principally on the systematic review, drawing on other publications and sources as appropriate in the discussion of the findings.

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Learning

A study by Schieffer and Busse (2001) compared statewide achievement tests (in maths, reading, social studies, science and language) of fourth grade economically disadvantaged minority students from a public Steiner school and a neighbouring public school in the United States (US). It found that, over the two years for which data on test scores were analysed, socially disadvantaged students in the Steiner school did better than comparable students in the neighbouring school. Although a small-scale study, its findings are in line with evidence from the study of a Steiner-inspired publicly funded school (in Milwaukee in the US) which found that Black (African American) pupils in a deprived inner city environment taught at the school scored above grade level in reading (McDermott 1996, Byers et al 1996).

Other research also suggests a positive relationship between Steiner school education and learning and achievement. Hutchingson and Hutchingson's (1993) Canadian study of gifted students, in which mainstream students were introduced to a Steiner curriculum, found that non-gifted Steiner students showed characteristics of the creative behaviour of gifted pupils. This finding suggests that Steiner schooling encourages a greater creativity throughout the whole of the Steiner school's student population. Their study goes on to identify the sustained relationship with a main lesson teacher and a spiral curriculum organised along Steiner principles of extended study rather than 45 minute lessons, as being particularly beneficial. Both Cox and Rolands' (2000) and Ogletree's (2000) later studies also provide robust research data supporting the proposition that Steiner education is beneficial for the development of creative and artistic abilities. Cox and Rolands tested sixty children in the UK between the ages of 5 and 7, matched for intellectual ability – 20 each from a Steiner, Montessori and (private) traditional school. Three drawings completed by each child were assessed by two raters and the consequent ratings subjected to rigorous statistical analysis. Cox and Rolands (2000: 485) conclude that "the approach to art education in Steiner schools is conducive not only to more highly rated imaginative drawings in terms of general drawing ability and use of colour but also to more accurate and detailed observational drawings". Ogletree (2000) investigated the creative ability of 1,165 third to sixth grade students, matched on the basis of their socio-economic status, from six Steiner and six state schools in England, Scotland and Germany. Students were administered the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking Ability, as well as a qualitative comparative examination made of randomly sampled drawings. Generally Steiner school students obtained significantly higher creativity scores than their state school peers.

The study by Jelinek and Sun (2003) in the US is an important addition to the comparative research literature concerning Steiner and mainstream schools. It

investigated the anthroposophical basis of the Steiner curriculum with particular reference to science education, though literature review, surveys and interviews, videotaped classroom observations. This research took place in Californian and Massachusetts Steiner schools. Over 200 Steiner teachers, categorised as 'student', 'beginning', 'master' and 'expert' were surveyed, as well as a small number of representatives from teacher training. Steiner children and public school children were tested in logical reasoning, and a science activity involving magnetism developed by the TIMMS international comparative study was used to compare the practical performance of Steiner and public school children. The pupils' narrative responses to the task were analysed in depth. Jelinek and Sun's findings on science education endorse the claim that pupils taught less content and subjected to less examination pressure, as in Steiner schools, do better in the long run. Scientific reasoning of Steiner school students was found to be superior, and the gains were greatest in the upper schools. On a less positive note the study raised serious questions about science knowledge content and presentation of Steiner materials was generally unfavourably reviewed.

Some studies might be interpreted as inviting inferences to be made about learning and educational development. For example, the work by Payne et al. (2002: 32) is about children with attention deficit disorders, but, with regard to these, investigates the impact of an Intervention Pack recommending changes which are "intrinsic to Waldorf education practice and school and home ethos". Any effects from making these changes (which cover diet, media, organisational structure, exercise, behaviour strategies, environmental modifications, social skills training etc.) might be inferred as indicating something about Steiner school education. Payne et al. (2002) found that, as a result of the Intervention Pack, children with attention deficit disorders at school were found to have made improvements academically and behaviourally, in general motor and social abilities, and in stress reactions/calmness. However, it has to be emphasised that a study such as this was not designed to allow inferences to be made about the impact of Steiner education on the general population of pupils. Reports of research such as that by Rivers and Soutter (1996) implicitly suggest that Steiner students learn better because there are relatively low levels of harassment and bullying and good relationships amongst students. Rivers and Soutter's study involved interviewing pupils in Classes 6, 8 and 10 in a Steiner school in England using the Olweus bullying inventory, in order to investigate levels of bullying and test the hypothesis that less bullying will be evident because of the Steiner school ethos. Its findings suggest that there may be lower levels of bullying in Steiner schools. Whilst the study did not examine the link between bullying and learning, it did find that the lack of physical bullying in the school investigated "is reflected in pupils' relatively high levels of self-esteem and general liking for the school" (op. cit.: 374). Positive attitudes amongst pupils to themselves and to school are likely to have a beneficial impact on learning, as is suggested by research in mainstream schools (Ruddock and Flutter 2004, for example) , Rivers and Soutter's study, however, is small-scale and did not generate comparative data with mainstream schools.

A study carried out in North America by Smith (1998) investigated the perceptions of individuals involved with Steiner and Steiner-inspired education concerning outcomes. A total of 250 questionnaires were sent to schools, training centres, colleges and conference

participants in the US and Canada, with 150 being completed and returned[15]. Smith's survey shows large majorities affirming that Steiner education successfully enables students to develop a strong sense of self, good life skills, and strong academic and intellectual skills, and prepares them for meaningful work. One of the limitations of Smith's survey is that it provides data on perceptions but no independent measures of the impact of Steiner education. A limitation of the report of the findings is its brevity and the lack of information on the respondents to the survey. It is interesting to note, however, that whilst the survey shows respondents generally positive about the results of Steiner education, a significantly lower proportion (a half) considered that Steiner education successfully prepares students for college admission[16].

Henry's (1992) comparative study of a Steiner school and private elite preparatory school in the US showed how regular school practices reflected very different conceptions of what educational progress means. In this ethnographic research, carried out by the author as a participant observer over a year, insight is gained into the differences between each school's broad curriculum, which includes all activities, relationships and cultural messages conveyed outside classroom teaching. The findings show how very different conceptions of what educational progress means are revealed by differences in the broad curriculum. These differences may have a bearing on the social and personal learning of students in a broader sense. Henry, for example, contrasts parent-teacher meetings about children's progress in the two schools. In the Steiner school emphasis is placed on orally reporting to parents (though written reports are provided) and communicating a rounded picture of the child in terms of contribution to the group, artistic and creative development and development of intuitive thinking, as well as including art work done by the teacher for the child. In the elite preparatory school, parent-teacher meetings are more structured and report quarterly test results, discussion centres "around individual achievement and the ability to engage in independent learning", techniques for improvement are offered, and knowledge is "seen as something to be compartmentalized and objectively assessed" (op. cit.: 305). The data reported, however, do not provide insights into student or staff perceptions of the regular practices or direct evidence of whether and how the learning of the schools' respective students differs.

None of the studies reviewed sought to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the extent to which learning and outcomes amongst Steiner pupils were successful in terms of Steiner education's own educational philosophy and aims[17]. Jelinek and Sun's (2003) study, however, does suggest that Steiner education is successful in its aim to educate human beings, being particularly successful in stimulating imaginative thought and creating eager, confident and curious students. The Steiner emphasis on whole to part

[15] The report of the study gives no further details about the individuals surveyed.
[16] Three reports on the progression of Steiner pupils after leaving school came to the attention of the research team during the research but, for varying reasons, could not be included in the systematic review (Bugjerde 1995, Dahlin 2005, Jackson 1995).
[17] Masters' (1996) study – described as a 'reflexive journey' which included document analysis, examination of Steiner's writing and archives, biographical reflection and conversations with Steiner educators in England and other countries (Israel, Switzerland and Poland for example) - compares practice in UK schools with Steiner's original aims, highlighting some of the shortcomings of current Steiner teachers in relation to the original aims.

progression is in concordance with the views of Jerome Bruner, the American developmental psychologist credited with the idea of the spiral curriculum. There is empirical evidence to suggest that Steiner practice is good in this regard, and that Steiner education organised along child developmental principles is in harmony with those aspects of mainstream theories of child development by psychologists such as Piaget.

Investigating how far Steiner education is successful in its own terms is, nevertheless, challenging. As noted in Section 2.2, it aims to encourage balanced growth towards physical, behavioural, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual maturation and to contribute to the process whereby the person is able to express his or her "spiritual core" (Rawson and Richter 2000: 7)[18]. The consequences of successful Steiner education may take many years to unfold in a person's life. Some of the reviewed research provides, nevertheless, insights into what are perceived to be distinctive educational benefits of Steiner schools. Research concerning Steiner education's particular emphasis on development of lateral thinkers through creative and artistic abilities has already been mentioned. Another aspect of Steiner schools' distinctiveness is the importance of the intrinsic value of the educational experience as such. Uhrmacher (1993a) studied two US Steiner schools in order to understand what Steiner educational philosophy meant for school and classroom life. The research involved observation of events, meetings, festivals and four classrooms (2nd and 5th grades in one school, 3rd and 4th in the other), and interviews with teachers, student teachers, administrators and some parents. Uhrmacher highlights the sustained and consistent effort that the Steiner teachers he observed put into establishing contact with each of their students. This was done through a variety of methods which Uhrmacher terms focal activities[19]. Whilst the study does not measure their impact on learning and achievement, Uhrmacher (1993a: 442) makes the point that:

> Understanding activities designed to create contact with students will not… help [the US] to become number one in math or science. Recognizing and heeding focal activities, however, may help a child enjoy school, feel valued, or be prepared to learn something new, and these are not bad things for which to strive.

The study by Rivers and Soutter (1996) provides some evidence which is supportive of the view that Steiner education encourages ethical and social development. Its findings highlight the integration of moral learning, the real life contextualisation of learning and the effectiveness of the school ethos and teacher/pupil relationships. Payne et al's (2002) study, whilst focusing on ways of tackling attention deficit orders and not being a school-based study, provides evidence that supports the contention that Steiner school education has benefits for children's academic development, behaviour and development of general motor and social abilities.

[18] "As Steiner himself put it, the human being is a citizen of three different worlds: 'In body, we both belong to and perceive the outer world; in soul, we build up our own inner world; and in spirit, a third world that is higher than both of the others reveals itself to us' ." (Rawson and Richter 2000: 14).
[19] More information on focal activities is provided on p. 34 of this report.

The impact of Steiner schooling may not necessarily be the same across all the different aspects of students' educational and personal development. An interesting question in this regard is raised by the survey conducted by Smith (1998). This found that whilst 80% or more involved with Steiner education agreed that it develops students' artistic abilities, appreciation of nature, imagination, intuitive abilities, strong sense of self and strong academic and intellectual skills, a smaller majority (65%) considered it encouraged students to develop spiritual consciousness, an appreciation of cultural diversity and a sense of service to the school community. Less than half thought that it encourages students to develop a sense of responsibility to the wider community. These by no means can be taken as definitively indicating less success in the latter areas of development (especially bearing in mind the limitations of Smith's study already alluded to). The lower proportion considering that Steiner education develops spiritual consciousness, for example, may be associated with the strong emphasis on enabling students to develop so they can make a choice and that some may choose as they grow up not to attach importance to the spiritual. Indeed, over 90% of respondents to Ogletree's (1998: 21) international survey (see below) were of the view that Steiner education develops 'free thinking' individuals. The findings of Smith's study do suggest, however, that further, more nuanced research may be especially worthwhile into the effect of Steiner education in areas such as spiritual development, appreciation of cultural diversity and a sense of service within the school community (adding to Rivers and Soutter's {1996} study for example) and, especially, the wider community.

The wider concern of Steiner education with the school community is the subject of Stehlik's (2003a, b) case study of an Australian Steiner school. Stehlik examines the school as the hub of adult learning, showing how it is a focus especially for parental learning. He describes the school as "an intentional learning community" (op cit: 176) which offers opportunities for all community members to engage in learning (through lectures, access to the school's library resources, a deepening relationship between parent and teacher, etc.) and a site for social development. A key component of this is "practical spirituality" (op cit: 177) which integrates spiritual development and an active commitment to the community and co-operative action.

Two further points are highlighted in Stehlik's work, which relate to each other and draw attention to the challenge and profound claims of Steiner education. One is the importance of family and home to the child's education[20]. The second is how Steiner education can challenge parents and result in some not giving it their full acceptance - and therefore, by extension, it might be concluded from this, not provide the full support to the Steiner curriculum in the home. Describing the Steiner school's community as a community of practice "in which meaningful activities can contribute to individual learning and development while at the same time creating cultural capital and building community", Stehlik (2003b: 177; original emphasis) concludes:

> Many of the learning situations are *informal* and *incidental* and involve social interaction in groups that come together for a variety of purposes, either intentionally or by chance. Some of these learning situations include an element of *transformative learning* as

[20] This is a point at a general level with which most mainstream educators would agree as well.

> individual meaning-making systems and beliefs are challenged and transformed through experiencing and engaging with the core values and beliefs of the community. For some individuals, the challenge to their own established beliefs and values is too great, and often a choice is made to leave the community entirely or engage with it only at a superficial level.

This seems to bring to the fore an important issue. The necessary support from parents and carers for the Steiner curriculum and its pedagogy which Steiner schools sees in its own terms as essential to student learning, is not only not always forthcoming but also is in part a consequence of the challenge inherent in Steiner philosophy.

4.1.2 Process

Whilst it is evident from the discussion above that process – the conditions, pedagogy, relationships, etc. that frame student experience – cannot be neatly separated from learning, it is worthwhile highlighting some of the aspects of this that have been researched.

Relationships

The kind of relationships which appear to be formed within Steiner schools has attracted research interest. A case study by Soutter and Rivers (undated), involving detailed interviews of four pupils, supported by observation and informal diary keeping, investigated teasing, following the findings of an earlier study on bullying (Rivers and Soutter 1996). Soutter and Rivers' finings re-inforce indications in that previous study that integration of learning with moral thinking and feeling may contribute to the Steiner class as a cohesive group. They found evidence that a class "looks after its own" members even when they are unpopular and teased within the class. Students interviewed by Easton (1997) spoke of the US Steiner school she was studying as a caring community. Another study, which investigated the Milwaukee Steiner-inspired public school, highlighted the following socially inclusive practices as beneficial: the method of caring for the children, methods of reducing time spent on disciplinary problems in a challenging inner city environment and how confrontation was handled (McDermott et al. 1996). One of the most significant findings of the Milwaukee study was that the Steiner practice of a continuing class teacher enabled these other benefits to be realised. Nicholson (2000), in his case study of a US Steiner school involving lesson observation, review of school documentation and pupils' work, and pre- and post-observation interviews of teachers, drew attention to the detailed knowledge of pupils gained from teaching them continuously for a number of years.

This suggests that a sense of a mutually supportive community is created in the school which lessens (though does not eliminate) the need for disciplinary measures. To over-simplify, care replaces discipline.

Findings on relationships are not entirely positive, at least as far as teachers are concerned. House (2001), based on his findings from a small group of UK teachers, suggests that there are indications of significant levels of stress stemming from, amongst

other factors, parental expectations. In a survey of Australian Steiner teachers, Mazzone (1999) found that over three-quarters (78%) of teachers questioned felt that the collegial system and inefficient management practices led to teacher stress and burn out.

Routine, Rituals and ceremony

One of the features of Steiner education highlighted by research is the attention given in schools to the value and meaning of rituals, symbols and ceremony (Easton 1997). In her study of the history of Steiner education, Oberman (1997: 1) identifies one of the key explanations for Steiner education's continuity and sustained identity its "semiotic supports: its symbols, motifs and rituals". Henry (1992) delineates some of the differences in their nature and meaning in a Steiner school as compared with a mainstream school. Rituals and ceremony do not stand apart from the other everyday experience of the school, but influence how relationships are understood and experienced. Henry describes staff meetings in the Steiner school as having "a pattern of greetings, verses and prayers, songs, supper, business, closing, and farewells" and expressing a community metaphor without hierarchy, rather than rule by time and efficiency and leadership derived from one head teacher (op. cit.: 302). In Uhrmacher's (1993b) research, the relationship with students is the focus and the significance of what he terms focal activities that Steiner teachers he studied consistently engaged in. Focal activities describe those practices through which "teachers establish, confirm, or discontinue contact between themselves and students" (op. cit.: 437) and comprise "a number of activities… conducted by every teacher… observed" as part of the study (op. cit.: 436), They include shaking hands with each child every morning, having pupils sing (rather than state) their attendance, lighting a candle before reciting a verse or telling a story and playing a musical instrument (such as the kinderharp) for the class. Focal activities:

- routinise contact
- can be used diagnostically
- personalise teacher-pupil contacts and the classroom
- create classroom moods
- have pedagogical implications (e.g. preparing pupils for forthcoming content)
- re-establish and confirm contact.

This analysis and conceptualisation offer potentially stimulating ideas for mainstream education. Uhrmacher (1993a) in his analysis also draws attention to commonalities and links between what he observes and themes and practices in mainstream education which helps to open the way for sharing and dialogue between to the two sectors (discussed in Section 4.1.4). Golden's (1997) study of narrative or story in the Steiner curriculum analyses its dimensions in a way that may be useful for mainstream educators to consider:

- story as part of curriculum
- story as a teaching strategy, to teach content (e.g. maths)
- story as a way to teach values.

But, what gives Steiner education its character, and what may account for any educational advantages when compared with mainstream schooling, is not a collection of

techniques, a different set of priorities or even greater use *per se* of pedagogical approaches such as use of narrative. Cox and Rowlands (2000: 501), reflecting on their findings which show Steiner school pupils displaying more developed creative and artistic abilities, suggest that it is not just a case of giving more time to art but that "the crucial factor may be teachers' attitude" and their better understanding of the wider educational value of artistic activity. More than this, the distinctiveness of Steiner schooling arises from the interaction of the different, fundamental features of school life, which Armon (1997) refers to as reciprocity. Armon's research reinforces the value of focal activities and how these are in mutually supportive interaction with anthroposophy, the curriculum and other aspects of the Steiner school.

4.1.3 Social justice issues

Few studies investigate social justice issues, i.e. the relationship between Steiner education and gender, cultural diversity, ethnic minorities etc. Golden's (1997) study applies a critical, poststructuralist analysis to narrative and gender in an Australian Steiner school. She suggests that the stories used throughout the Steiner curriculum are embedded "within patriarchy" (op. cit.: 3). She goes on to suggest that, on the basis of classroom observations, the male, and male hierarchy, appear as the norm in stories (op. cit.: 4, 6), and, on the basis of interviews with children, stories are interpreted in ways that reinforce gender stereotypes. This is just one, small-scale study which requires testing and replication by other researchers in other contexts.

The issue of racism arose in the study of the Milwaukee Steiner-inspired public school (McDermott et al 1996)[21]. During the course of the research, a discussion with a "visiting representative of the international Waldorf community" raised the question of latent racism in some of Steiner's ideas, though because it would reflect unfairly on the school the discussion was not reported in the report (McDermott 1996: 3). A debate was prompted in the pages of *Research Bulletin*. McDermott (ibid), one of the researchers, explained that it was important "to consider the possibility that some naïve forms of racism are endemic to those who embrace anthroposophy without a strong critical sense for the real possibility that Steiner's speculations about the racial organization of culture and consciousness were wrong". Writing in the context of the US, McDermott (op. cit.: 5) concludes:

> Whatever Steiner did say, whatever he might say if he were alive, if only a few Waldorf teachers can nurture what might be a Steiner-derived anti-Semitic or anti-African American prejudice, then Waldorf educators will have to critique themselves before their pedagogy can be of systematic use across the country.

In response, Sloan (1996: 9), editor of *Research Bulletin* at the time, acknowledges the need to reject unambiguously racism and to take a critical approach towards Rudolf Steiner's own statements which may be interpreted as racist because they are culture-bound and "carry the racism of an earlier time" or, taken out of the context in which they

[21] The issue has also arisen on a US website devoted to critics of Steiner education (www.waldorfcritics.org).

were spoken, appear racist to contemporary ears. Sloan also emphasises Steiner's call to people not to accept anything uncritically – not even his own statements – and his presentation of the evolution of consciousness which emphasises the necessity and possibility both "of affirming our human differences and of finding a human unity through and beyond these differences" (op. cit.: 15).

The research question is whether Steiner schools in practice, through their ethos, curriculum and/or pedagogy, help towards overcoming unjust social distinctions and cultural hierarchies, or whether (perhaps unconsciously) they reinforce or exacerbate them. Easton (1997: 8), drawing from her involvement in the Milwaukee study and her own research, concludes that by creating "a more alive context for learning" in the way that Steiner education does, teachers can help children from diverse backgrounds become more enthusiastic about learning. She also draws attention to the fact that Steiner-inspired schools are opening in different cultural settings and can, in her view, adapt to "a truly pluralistic spirituality" (ibid).

4.1.4 Challenges/issues in closer links with the state sector

Steiner schools tend to retain their distinctive identity and practices which mark them out from mainstream state schools. Ogletree (1998) conducted an international survey to which mostly teachers from 234 Steiner schools in 31 countries responded. In the survey, respondents from around nine out of ten schools affirmed the following practices characteristic of Steiner education:

- teaching through the two-hour main lesson,
- a balanced school day of academic, artistic and physical activities,
- the same teacher staying with a class from Class 1 to Class 8,
- meditation/prayer at the beginning of each day,
- pupil-written and illustrated workbooks and
- teaching of form drawing in Classes 1 to 5.

Seventy per cent also agreed that Steiner education subtly influenced or predisposed pupils to be open to the spiritual world and anthroposophy, though more (91%) emphasised that Steiner education develops 'free thinking' individuals able to make their own choice with regard to the spiritual in their own life rather than aiming to produce adult anthroposophists.

Qualitative studies, such as that by Armon (1997) – as well as Golden (1997) and Uhrmacher (1993a,b) already cited - also provide insights into significant differences with mainstream schools. Armon's (1997: 17) paper highlights the significance for Steiner educators of "inner work" in which teachers consciously reflect upon who they are as human beings. It is distinctive from reflection amongst mainstream teachers because "it is deliberate, is founded upon Anthroposophical literature and study groups, and is a shared topic of discussion among teachers" (ibid). Reflecting on how Steiner schooling compares with mainstream schooling in the public sector, Armon also suggests that where public school teachers bring themes into the curriculum, they tend to be material or technical characteristics of a topic, such as Eskimo history or the principles of physics: "It is not common to find curricular topics in which teachers deliberately present

students with opportunities to immerse themselves in the manifestations of good and evil, such as appears in the Waldorf fourth grade study of Norse myths, for example, or the Waldorf high school study of the human body as one representation of the microcosm within the macrocosm" (op. cit.: 16). Ward's (2001) study also bears out the differences between Steiner teaching and mainstream (and Montessori) teaching. Drawing on qualitative data from teachers in Steiner, Montessori, Government and Catholic schools in Australia, it found that in Steiner schools much more attention is paid to rhythm, ritual, narrative and the integration of movement, poetry and music into classroom routines.

The international survey by Ogletree (1998: 26) found that "tuitions" (fees) was the source of school income ranked as most important in the majority of cases. However, a number of countries have experienced a process whereby Steiner schools moved from the private sector to the state sector, including Norway, Finland, Sweden and New Zealand. None of the research reviewed explored any of these processes. The relative paucity of research comparing Steiner and mainstream schools contributes to a limited knowledge base for considering the issues involved in Steiner schools integrating with the public sector or becoming more closely linked and actively engaged with state schools.

There are evident commonalities, as well as differences, between Steiner and mainstream education. Woods et al. (1997) draw attention to two aspects of mainstream education which resonate with Steiner education. The first is the "strong theme in British education emphasising the importance of teaching the whole child and the role of the school in personal and social development" (op. cit.: 33). The second is the recognition within mainstream education of the importance of self-reflection by teachers. This is not to argue that these are as central to contemporary mainstream education as they are to Steiner education (as Armon suggests concerning 'inner work' earlier in this section), but it is to emphasise that there are bridges to facilitate dialogue and interaction. Uhrmacher (1993a) highlights a number of these in his study of Steiner pedagogy, namely the importance of:

- *image* in Steiner and in other education theories/practices, e.g. Dewey, and the concept of 'curriculum thread' (p. 94/95)
- *rhythm* in Steiner and in Whitehead (p. 95/96) (This could also be linked with Piaget in so far as he argues students need time to assimilate and accommodate - p96/97.)
- *learning from the whole body* in Steiner and in Merleau-Ponty and Grumet (p. 98)
- *narrative* in Steiner and in Egan (p. 98).

These ideas are referred to in the definitions given in Section 2.2 and developed during the reporting of the case studies. Briefly, Steiner education places a strong emphasis on pupils' imagination and their ability to visualise. Excessive use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and its introduction at too ealy an age, is considered to damage this capability. Rhythm, which means being pedagogically in tune with natural body and brain rhythms, is a key concept and is related to the use of the whole body through thinking, willing and feeling. For example, movement (will) is used to reinforce memory (which could have a feeling or a thinking aspect). Story telling is an essential part of the oral and narrative tradition that permeates all Steiner education, for

example through speaking and listening activities by pupils and the teacher telling rather than reading stories.

Underlining the point that Steiner and mainstream education are not necessarily always completely different from each other is the exception that Ogletree (2000) found in his comparative study of creative thinking in Steiner and state schools in England, Scotland and Germany. Whilst Steiner school pupils generally obtained significantly higher creativity scores than their state school peers, English Steiner pupils did not display higher verbal fluency, flexibility and originality than their state school counterparts. Ogletree concludes that the "reason for this discrepancy is that English primary schools had a reputation for being progressive and innovative and not as traditional as their Scottish and German counterparts" (op. cit.: 5). This also is a reminder that what are referred to as mainstream or maintained schools are not monolithic groups of schools. There is considerable variation of practice within mainstream schooling. A long-term study of a UK state primary school, noted for its creative curriculum, described one aspect of its pedagogy as follows, emphasising its rejection of domination by instrumental and academic educational activity:

> Classroom sessions are always begun as a social activity, often continue in the same manner and, if individualised or group activities are introduced, then the climax of the session is organised as a social engagement to consider the learning objectives and processes." (Jeffrey and Woods 2003: 98)

It would seem likely, then, that there are some educational practices in mainstream schools that Steiner schools may learn from. On the basis of her study, Armon (1997) suggests Steiner teachers would benefit from re-evaluating the more formal whole class teaching they often rely on and consider greater use of less formal techniques through small-group teaching. Jelinek and Sun (2003) make a related suggestion – that there is too much teacher demonstration in Steiner schools.

A more fundamental challenge for Steiner education is also posed by Jelinek and Sun, who identify as problematic Goethe's scientific world view.[22] They suggest that, whilst Steiner schools' science education in many ways is shown to be better than that in mainstream schools, [Steiner education] "should disregard Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophy as the source of accurate scientific concepts". They also draw attention to what they see as the unwillingness of some Steiner educators to countenance correction of the curriculum in the light of advances in scientific knowledge, or clarification of basic errors.

However, it is important to note that Steiner educators would emphasise that much of the science teaching in Steiner schools is based on training the pupils to observe and come to their own conclusions rather than proving someone else's theory. To the extent that they are successful in this, pupils brought up on Steiner principles would be encouraged to critically question all theories, including those of Rudolf Steiner himself.

[22] Goethe was an important influence on Rudolf Steiner.

4.2 Conclusions

Six conclusions suggest themselves from this discussion.

Firstly, the research studies reviewed give a cumulative sense of a positive relationship between Steiner schools and learning, achievement and pupils' educational and social development. There is evidence that Steiner school pupils score relatively well on mainstream tests, and that they do relatively well in terms of development of creative, social and other capabilities important in the holistic growth of the person.

The research evidence has to be interpreted with caution, however. Studies are often small scale and conducted in different cultural and national contexts that may affect the confidence with which findings can be generalised to other settings. There are not always sufficient methodological details to assess with confidence the validity and reliability of some findings, as with Payne at al (2002) and Smith (1998) for example. More nuanced research would be worthwhile into the effect of Steiner education in areas such as spiritual development, appreciation of cultural diversity and a sense of service within the school community and the wider community - adding to work by Rivers and Soutter (1996) and Smith (1998) for example. In particular, there is little research which systematically compares learning and achievement in Steiner and mainstream schools. There are examples of good quality research that seeks to do this, such as Cox and Roland (2000), Ogletree (2000) and Schieffer and Busse (2001). However, it must be concluded that there is a paucity of rigorous research on the impact of Steiner school education on learning and achievement.

It does not follow from this that only quantitative, quasi-experimental studies are valuable, and that more of these, and no other, studies are needed. More quantitative investigations would add appreciably to the research evidence. But, equally, well designed and executed qualitative studies (including case studies and action research) are able to gain a depth of understanding of educational experience and insight into causal influences unavailable to exclusively quantitative investigations.

Secondly, the research studies reviewed give a cumulative impression that Steiner schools tend to create positive and mutually supportive relationships. However, the research on this shares the limitations summarised above concerning studies of Steiner school education on learning and achievement. In addition, two of the studies suggest that stress amongst teachers is generated by some aspects of Steiner schooling, such as parental expectations and the collegial way of running schools. More research into Steiner schools in different contexts, and in comparison with community-orientated mainstream schools[23], is needed to secure conclusions that a distinctive feature of Steiner education is that it generates such mutually supportive and caring relationships and to explore how this comes about. Research also needs to examine in greater depth negative aspects of relationships and expectations. The collegial running of Steiner schools – both its benefits and challenges – have attracted very little research.

[23] A good example is the creative state primary school studied in depth by Jeffrey and Woods (2003).

Thirdly, research affirms that a defining feature of Steiner education is the attention given to rhythm, rituals, symbols and ceremony, and the close attention given to everyone (including pupils) as individuals and as members of the community. Particularly important are the focal activities, as described by Uhrmacher for example, through which teachers establish, confirm or discontinue contact between themselves and pupils.

Fourthly, the question of Steiner education and social justice issues – how it affects and approaches gender, cultural diversity, ethnic minorities etc. – is little researched. A small study by Golden (1997) raised issues to do with gender. From within the Steiner movement, it is acknowledged that, whilst there are ways in which Steiner education can be shown to have pioneered equal opportunities, Steiner teachers in the UK have been urged not to ignore the issue of gender stereotyping (Rawson 2004). Rawson argues that it is an issue on which too little is known in Steiner education and there is an urgent need for research. The debate about racism, following the study of the Milwaukee Steiner-inspired school, also highlights the need to consider questions of institutionalised social exclusion. The point, recognised by some within Steiner education, is that Steiner teachers need to be critically reflective and self-questioning about the practical impact of what otherwise is taken-for-granted in the school's ethos, curriculum and pedagogy.

Fifthly, there are both differences and commonalities between Steiner and mainstream education**.** Differences include the attention given to rhythm, rituals, symbols, ceremony and focal activities, as noted. Research studies have given less attention to investigating how far the philosophical basis for Steiner education (anthroposophy) itself is integral to the distinctiveness of Steiner education and what implications this has for mutual sharing and learning with mainstream education. What seems likely is that what gives Steiner education its character is not a collection of techniques or its priorities, but – as Armon (1997) describes it - the interaction of the different, fundamental features of school life. It is, nevertheless, apparent from a number of studies that there are commonalities between Steiner and mainstream education. These include an interest in holistic education and certain pedagogical themes, of which child developmentalism[24] would be by far the most significant.

Sixthly, no research was found on Steiner schools entering the public sector, nor on the process and outcomes of mutual sharing of practices between Steiner and mainstream schools. Both of these are topics that would benefit from systematic investigation, through action research and other methods.

[24] Child developmentalism is the view, most significantly associated with Piaget, that children's minds under go a series of qualitative changes during cognitive maturation.

5. FINDINGS

This section reports the findings from the survey of Steiner schools (the schools' survey), the survey of Steiner teachers (the teachers' survey), and the case studies of good practice. Background data on the participating schools, including their admissions criteria, are presented in Section 5.1. Then the following aspects of Steiner education are addressed in turn in Sections 5.2 to 5.9: curriculum, national tests, pedagogy, SEN provision and inclusion, philosophy, leadership and management, parental involvement, and teachers. Within each section the appropriate findings relating to that aspect of Steiner education are reported from the schools' survey and the case studies of good practice, followed by a discussion of commonalities and differences with the maintained sector. Finally, in Section 5.10, findings from the teachers' survey are presented and discussed.

5.1 The Participating Schools

5.1.1 Background data

Table 5.1 provides information on the 21 participating schools. All percentages from the schools' survey are based on these 21 schools, unless otherwise stated.

School Code	Year of founda-tion[1]	Class range	Number of all pupils			SEN pupils statement:		ethnic minority pupils	EAL[4] / bilingual pupils	exclusions academic yr. 2003/04		GCSE offered	A levels offered
			Kg	Class 1+	total	with	with-out			temp	perm		
P	1999	Kg-Cl 4[5]	33	34	67	-	-	5	17	1	-	n/a[3]	n/a
E	2002	Kg-Cl 4	14	12	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
B	1993	Kg-Cl 5	16	27	43	0	4	-	2	2	-	n/a	n/a
T	1999	Kg-Cl 5	33	52	85	1	3	8	22	-	1	n/a	n/a
G	2001	Kg-Cl 5	30	42	72	2	9	32	27	0	2	n/a	n/a
Y	1989	Kg-Cl 6	31	19	50	1	6	0	6	0	0	n/a	n/a
A	1995	Kg-Cl 6	-[2]	-	-	0	6	-	-	-	-	n/a	n/a
H	1996	Kg-Cl 6	29	88	117	2	20	28	22	3	-	n/a	n/a
W	1960	Kg-Cl 7	14	52	66	0	6	2	1	1	-	n/a	n/a
U	1973	Kg-Cl 8	69	132	201	1	22	21	19	0	0	n/a	n/a
F	1974	Kg-Cl 8	55	162	217	1	52	13	22	0	0	n/a	n/a
K	1983	Kg-Cl 8	19	56	75	0	4	16	10	-	1	n/a	n/a
D	1934	Kg-Cl 10	27	124	151	0	30	1	11	5	1	**yes**	n/a
J	1980	Kg-Cl 10	53	233	286	1	48	6	12	4	1	**yes**	n/a
N	1983	Kg-Cl 10	43	182	225	2	40	14	3	1	0	**yes**	n/a
V	1984	Kg-Cl 10	26	152	178	1	15	11	7	5	0	**yes**	n/a
R	1946	Kg-Cl 11	51	236	287	3	25	-	3	6	0	**yes**	n/a
S	1976	Kg-Cl 11	35	215	250	0	59	13	12	-	0	**yes**	n/a
C	1925	Kg-Cl 12	84	433	517	1	40	-	200	4	2	**yes**	**yes**
L	1937	Kg-Cl 12	d/k	280	-	1	65	15	35	-	2	**yes**	**yes**
M	1949	Kg-Cl 13[6]	67	334	401	1	49	20	12	-	2	**yes**	**yes**

Notes: 1. Source: Information from SWSF Schools List 2004; 2. A dash indicates that the figure is not available from the survey returns; 3. n/a = not applicable because of age range taken by the school; 4. EAL = English as an additional language; 5. Kg = Kindergarten, Cl = Class; 6. Class 13 is college year.

Table 5.1: Profiles of schools participating in schools survey

In the academic year 2004/05, 2865 pupils were attending the 20 Steiner schools in England which supplied data on numbers of pupils in their classes (Table 5.2). A further 729 children were attending kindergartens in the 19 Steiner schools which supplied data on kindergarten numbers.. The numbers attending Steiner schools decline from kindergarten onwards, principally because few Steiner schools are able to offer schooling through to upper school.

Class:	Boys	Girls	Total number of pupils
Kg[1]	391	338	729
1	139	173	312
2	158	153	311
3	146	159	305
4	153	150	303
5	136	145	281
6	141	132	273
7	119	140	259
8	128	113	241
9	110	102	212
10	88	97	185
11	49	74	123
12	18	31	49
13	5	6	11
Total	**1781**	**1813**	**3594**

1. Figures for Kindergarten (Kg) are based on 19 schools.

Table 5.2: Total number of pupils by kindergarten/class and gender[25]

A large majority (81%) of Steiner schools, rather than describing class groups as relatively stable as they proceed through the school, indicated that they fluctuate as a result of children leaving or joining. Of these, eight could identify clear patterns to these fluctuations. The large majority of schools (based on figures supplied for the academic year 2003/04) have pupils joining from and leaving for other Steiner, independent and state schools. The numbers and pattern vary according to the size, location and age range of the individual school. For example, several of the schools which identified patterns to the fluctuations in class groups gave some insight into these. School U explained that some leave at the end of Class 5 and other pupils join in Class 6. School R identified that fluctuations are more pronounced in Class 5, with some pupils leaving and others joining in that year. This was also the case in school S where this was related to the selection of pupils at age 11 for state grammar schools in that county. School L explained that there is some loss of pupils in Classes 8 and 10, and an influx of pupils in Classes 1, 6 and 9. In 2003/04, 21 pupils joined School L from other Steiner schools mainly for its upper school (Class 9 upwards) which many other Steiner schools do not have. School R also experiences pupils leaving at the end of Class 10, for vocational reasons.

Each school was asked what aspects of its curriculum, pedagogy, leadership or other feature of the school it considered it was especially good at or that others might learn

[25] With the exception of figures for Kindergarten, the figures in this table are based on 20 schools which supplied data.

from. The two themes that stood out in the replies were schools' collegial ethos and relationships (8 schools) and the arts (art, music, and/or drama) (5 schools). Amongst the other, specific responses, it is noteworthy that some of the urban schools highlighted the achievement of keeping going and offering Steiner schooling in difficult urban contexts (3 schools), whilst two of the rural schools drew attention to their environmental and outdoor curriculum (2 schools).

5.1.2 Admissions

Fifteen schools indicated that they have admissions criteria, whilst three indicated they do not[26]. Asked if they ever refused admission to applicants, all but one of the 20 schools which replied to this question indicated that they do[27]. Numbers of refusals in the previous five years are shown in Table 5.3.

number of refusals	number of schools
1	1
2	2
3	1
5	3
6	3
8	2
10-15	1
13	1
15	1
20	1

Table 5.3: Number of times applicants have been refused admission in last five years[28]

The most frequently cited reason for refusing admission was the school's assessment that it could not meet the child's educational needs. Of the 17 schools which cited this, seven specifically mentioned children's special educational needs (behavioural, social or learning). Other reasons given by the schools for refusing admission were: inability to offer a place where money was an issue for the parents, due for example to having insufficient concessionary places (4 schools); a judgement that there would be a detrimental effect on the receiving class (3 schools)[29]; Steiner philosophy/education does not appear to be appropriate for the child and/or parents/carers (3 schools)[30]; and classes being full (3 schools)[31].

[26] Three schools did not respond.
[27] The school which indicated that it did not refuse admissions qualified this response by explaining that it asks for reports and turns down applicants whose needs cannot be met.
[28] These figures are based on 15 schools responding to this question.
[29] For example, one school stated "too many new (and difficult) children in the class"; another stated "Constellation of class – ability of teacher to manage the child".
[30] For example, "parents unable to support school's ethos"; "not suitable education for the individual child".
[31] In one instance, the school explained that a reason could be that, whilst a teacher has one or two places available in his or her class, the teacher "may not want to fill them so [is] not 'actively accepting' rather than refusing". This indicates that a degree of discretion is used in making places available.

The written admissions criteria of schools which have these and which were collected by or sent to the research team (9 schools[32]) were analysed. The background to these criteria is that Steiner schools internationally emphasise that they are not academically selective and are open to all regardless of ethnic heritage, faith, gender and ability. The main criteria and considerations in reaching a decision about admission, which appear in the documents examined, are summarised below[33], together with some illustrative quotes from written admission policies:

- ability of school to meet child's needs (9 schools)

- effect of child on social dynamics and balance of class he or she would be joining (9 schools)

  > We aim to have a balanced constellation of pupils in each class and take into account the needs of both the existing class and the applicant when placing a new child.
  >
  > We aim to have a healthy constellation of pupils in each class and not to over-burden the class and teachers with more than a few children needing extra help.
  >
  > When considering the application of a new pupil, we consider:
  > 1. [the school's] suitability for his/her age, ability or special educational needs
  > 2. whether the acceptance of the applicant is compatible with the efficient education of the children already placed in our school
  > 3. whether we have the resources to meet his/her needs.
  > … We aim to have a 'healthy constellation' of pupils in each class and not to over-burden the class and teachers with more than a few children needing extra help.
  >
  > Kindergarten can be regarded as the primary admission point in the school… It needs to be recognised that as most of the children in a class will have been together since Kindergarten and because the pedagogy and curriculum is [sic] specific to Waldorf schools it becomes progressively more difficult for new pupils to integrate successfully into the classes. The selection criteria that are used therefore primarily aims [sic] to determine whether an applicant is likely to successfully integrate into the class having regard for the needs of the class as a whole and the needs of the individual child. Admission is a process designed to reveal the answer to that question rather than being a decision based on any one criteria [sic]. A key question is 'is this the best place for this child, and will this child benefit from a Waldorf Education?'.

- family support for / connection to Steiner philosophy, education and school ethos (6 schools)

  > The school reserves the right to refuse an application… if we feel that the family will not be supportive of the school's ethos.
  >
  > … willingness of parents to work with the ethos of the school…

[32] The policies of a further three schools did not contains admissions criteria.
[33] Not all of the criteria and considerations appear in all of the admissions policies. Therefore, the numbers of schools citing each one is shown in brackets. Indeed, some statements of the criteria are considerably more detailed than others.

… parents need to be able to demonstrate they have made a "connection" with Waldorf education per se (its anthroposophical base, understanding of human development etc.)

- suitability of Steiner education for the child (3 schools)

  Both parents and teachers need to feel the suitability of the education for the child. In this sense we are assessing each other…

- child in relation to school as a whole (3 schools)

  Decision about acceptance is considered from many perspectives including… the child in the context of the school as a whole.

- teacher decision (2 schools)

  The teacher in consultation with other staff decides **if** they will accept the child.

  [one of the criteria where a lower school class is 'closed':] children who will be an asset to the class (in the class teacher's view)… By '*asset*' we are referring to a positive influence to the whole class and/or school. A child who is not going to negatively affect the learning of the whole group.

- pupils moving from other Steiner schools (7 schools)
- children from school's own playgroups/kindergarten (2 schools)
- siblings of children already in the school (6 schools)
- children of staff (5 schools)
- parents'/carers' ability to meet financial commitment if child admitted (2 schools).

Most schools (81%) also re-assess the suitability of pupils for Steiner education after they have started at the school. Of the 17 which carry out a re-assessment, the vast majority (14) do this during or at the end of the first term. Seven have set criteria for this re-assessment, but most (9) do not.

5.2 Curriculum

5.2.1 Survey findings (curriculum)

Each Steiner school is an autonomous institution and is not required to follow a prescribed curriculum. However, as a result of their common commitment to the

principles and philosophy of Steiner education, there is a great deal of consistency amongst the schools in terms of the curriculum they offer.

Subject Coverage

Steiner schools provide a wide and balanced curriculum through provision of a wide range of subjects which continue ideally until pupils leave the school after upper school. The topic areas within subjects follow the approach of a spiral curriculum, in which topics are revisited as children grow older, but at different levels in line with their phase of development. Table 5.4 gives a broad outline of the subject areas covered in the 15 schools which commented on a draft overview of the Steiner curriculum[34]. This shows that schools cover from Class 1, maths, English, science and subjects familiar in the national curriculum in England, as well as curriculum areas such as eurythmy and gardening that give a distinctive character to Steiner schools. Below an outline is given of some of the important components of these subject areas. This is not intended to provide a comprehensive and detailed description across the 15 schools of each subject and its progression. Examples of subject lessons are given through case study vignettes in Section 5.2.2.

Maths/arithmetic. Through lower school, there is an emphasis on acquiring numeracy skills through escalating levels of complexity. Curriculum provision includes: number and form drawing from Class 1; measurement (introduced in Class 3), geometry (introduced in Class 4), and algebra and data with more demanding calculations of different number types (introduced in Class 6). In upper school, mathematical skills and understanding are further developed in areas such as geometry and algebra and through the introduction of subjects such as trigonometry (introduced in Class 9).

English language/literature. Through lower school, there is an emphasis on acquiring literacy skills and developing increasing sophistication through speaking/listening, writing and reading from Class 1 (one school introduces reading in Class 2); grammar (introduced in Classes 2 or 3) and essay writing (usually introduced in Class 6, sometimes Class 5). In upper school there is an enhanced focus on English literature, whilst language skills continue to be strengthened. In Class 12, pupils stage a play to the school community.

Science: This includes a curriculum area referred to as life sciences by Steiner schools. Life sciences begin from Class 1 with stories of the living world. Observation and description of the living world is introduced in Class 4, with zoology usually introduced in Class 5 (in one case Class 4), as well as study of the human being by some schools in Class 4, and botany in Classes 5 or 6. Chemistry is integrated into life sciences until Class 7 when it is introduced as a subject. Physics is introduced as a subject in Class 6. From Class 6 subjects covered by life sciences include human biology, geology and astronomy.

Modern Foreign Languages: These begin in Class 1 with poems and songs and naming things and they are further developed into spoken and written language. In

[34] This was based on guidelines in Rawson and Richter (2000) and is in Appendix A of the survey schedule (Appendix 4 of this report).

upper school there is a further focus on literature. The main languages are French and German. More data on modern foreign languages is reported below and in Section 5.2.2.

Geography: This begins in Class 1 and is described as enabling pupils to get to know and feel connected with their surroundings and the work of human beings. In Class 4 local geography is introduced, progressing to farming and industry considered in partnership with nature (introduced in Class 5 - in one school, Class 3) and to the geography of the British Isles, Europe and the World.

History: History begins with mythical and archetypal narrative in Classes 1 to 3. In class 4 the first sense of history is given from the local environment. In all but one school history as a subject is introduced in Class 5.

Art/Aesthetics: Painting and drawing comprise part of the curriculum throughout Classes 1 to 8 and continue when art is introduced as a subject. Modelling, using materials such as clay and beeswax is also an important part of the curriculum, as is sculpture introduced in Class 4 by all but one school. Art as a subject is introduced in Class 9, though according to some schools (Table 5.5) subject lessons in art begin in Class 5.

Eurythmy: An art of movement originated and developed by Rudolf Steiner which is meant to help children develop harmoniously with mind, body and soul, eurythmy continues from Class 1 through all of the classes.

Music: This begins in Class 1 with singing and playing musical instruments and continues through the classes. The study of music is introduced in Class 3, with some schools offering options such as a school orchestra and country dancing.

Movement: Beginning in Class 1, this continues throughout the classes and includes games, gymnastics and sport**.**

Crafts: Handwork (such as knitting, woodwork, making three-dimensional objects, and leatherwork) form part of the curriculum during Classes 1 to 8. Craft work using machines is introduced in Class 8. From Class 9, craft work includes basket-making, carpentry / joinery, metalwork, dressmaking, textile technology, batik, weaving, cardboard work, bookbinding, and puppetry, though not all schools provide all of these and in some schools some of these (such as weaving, metalwork and batik) are introduced before Class 9.

Information and communication technology: Computers are introduced as part of the curriculum in Class 8 or 9.

Technology: This is introduced as a specific study in Class 10, building on physics, chemistry and work experience. Some schools pointed out that aspects of technology are part of the curriculum in earlier years, through carpentry and farming for example.

Practical projects: Practical projects/work experience, which Rawson and Richter's (2000) guidelines suggest begins in Class 9 as a curriculum area, includes agriculture, practical first aid, surveying, forestry, work experience, social practical (e.g. caring tasks in hospitals etc), theatre practical, art trips and a Class 12 project. Some schools drew attention to aspects of the curriculum in earlier years, such as woodwork and bricklaying, which involve practical work, and one school cited an end of year project in Class 8.

Gardening: Gardening, which Rawson and Richter's (2000) guidelines suggest begins in Class 6 as a curriculum area and overlaps with environmental studies and

ecology, starts with basic practical activities, and ideally progresses in later years to woodland work, landscape, building paths etc., propagation techniques, caring for bushes/trees, and grafting. Some schools explained that aspects of gardening, such as planting flowers and tending a vegetable garden, begin in the earlier years. For two schools, this starts in Class 1. Not all schools could provide all aspects of gardening, and one could offer no gardening at all and another none in Classes 9 to 12.

Social skills. Cultivation of social skills is integral to the curriculum during Classes 1 to 6, and in later classes where social studies is introduced as a subject in Class 7 and life skills in Class 9.

Religious education. In some form, religious education (or ethics, as one school described the curriculum theme) is important throughout the school years. (This is discussed further in Section 5.2.3.) In Class 12, philosophy is introduced in the main lesson as well as explored in other subjects.

Table 5.4: The Steiner Curriculum

Class	maths	English	life sciences	chemis-try	physics	modern foreign langua-ges	geog-raphy	history	art / aesthet-ics	euruth-my	music	move-ment[4]	crafts	ICT	techno-logy	pract-ical proj-ects	garden-ing	social skills	religious education[9]
1	✓	✓	✓	*[1]	-	✓	✓	*[3]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*[6]	*[7]	*[8]	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	*[1]	-	✓	✓	*[3]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*[6]	*[7]	*[8]	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓	*[1]	-	✓	✓	*[3]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*[6]	*[7]	*[8]	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓	*[1]	-	✓	✓	*[3]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*[6]	*[7]	*[8]	✓	✓
5	✓	✓	✓	*[1]	-	✓	✓	✓[2]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*[6]	*[7]	*[8]	✓	✓
6	✓	✓	✓	*[1]	✓[2]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*[6]	*[7]	✓	✓	✓
7	✓	✓	✓	✓[2]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*[6]	*[7]	✓	✓	✓
8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*[5]	*[6]	*[7]	✓	✓	✓
9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓[2]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*[6]	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓[10]

1. Integrated into life sciences.
2. Introduced as a subject.
3. Mythical and archetypal narrative is part of the curriculum in classes 1 to 3.
4. Includes games, gymnastics and sport.
5. Some schools appear to introduce computers in Class 8, but many do not do so until Class 9.
6. Technology as a specific study is introduced in Class 10.
7. Whilst Rawson and Richter's (2000) guidelines suggest that practical projects/work experience begins in Class 9 as a curriculum area, some schools drew attention to aspects of the curriculum in earlier years, such as woodwork and bricklaying, which involve practical work.
8. Rawson and Richter's (2000) guidelines suggest that gardening begins in Class 6 as a curriculum area. Some schools explained that aspects of gardening begin in the earlier years. Not all schools could provide all, or in some cases any, aspects of gardening in their curriculum.
9. Several schools drew attention to the importance of a weekly religious education class.
10. Philosophy is introduced in the main lesson as well as explored in other subjects.

Table 5.5 shows the range of subject lessons given outside the daily main lesson during Classes 1 to 8. Subject lessons in lower school are predominantly concerned with practical activities (such as handwork), movement and exercise in eurythmy and games, and modern foreign languages.

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8
Handwork	13	14	14	13	11	9	8	6
Eurythmy	13	13	13	12	11	9	8	7
German	13	13	12	13	11	9	7	7
French	10	11	12	11	10	9	8	7
Religious education[1]	6	7	8	9	8	7	6	6
Music	5	7	7	10	9	6	5	5
Games	5	9	11	9	5	4	3	2
Painting	7	7	7	7	5	2	1	-
Art	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	4
Maths	-	-	1	4	5	5	5	4
English	-	1	2	3	4	4	3	2
Drawing	2	3	3	4	5	1	1	-
Woodwork	-	-	1	-	1	8	8	6
Gym	-	-	2	2	3	3	3	3
Modelling	1	1	2	2	2	1	-	-
Gardening	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	4
Cookery	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1
Base[2]	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**	**14**	**1O**	**8**	**7**

Notes: 1. Although not all schools indicated they have a religious education lesson, religious education (or ethics, as one school described the curriculum theme) in some form is important throughout the school years in all schools.
2. This figure gives the number of schools with the relevant Class responding to this question.

Table 5.5: Number of schools teaching subject lessons (Classes 1-8) - most frequently mentioned subjects

Table 5.6, which sets out non-examination subjects taught during Classes 9 to 12, reflects the importance attached to a broad curriculum through the older years. A range of non-examination subjects is provided, with eurythmy, art, crafts, music, movement and religious education most common.

	Class 9	Class 10	Class 11	Class 12
Eurythmy	7	7	5	3
Art[1]	6	5	3	-
Crafts[2]	7	6	3	1
Music[3]	6	6	4	3
Life skills	2	1	-	-
ICT	2	1	-	-
Games, gym, sport (movement)	6	6	5	3
Religiouseducation[4]	6	7	4	2
tutorial	2	1	1	-
Science	2	1	-	-
German	2	1	-	-
French	2	1	-	-
English	2	1	-	1
Maths	2	1	-	-
Drama	3	1	1	2
History	1	-	-	-
PSHE	-	1	1	-
Gardening	1	1	-	-
Current events	1	1	1	1
Base[5]	**9**	**9**	**5**	**3**

Notes: 1. includes modelling; 2. includes craft work with machines, such as metalwork; 3. includes orchestra, choir, singing; 4. Although not all schools indicated they have a religious education lesson, religious education (or ethics, as one school described the curriculum theme) in some form is important throughout the school years in all schools; 5. This figure gives the number of schools with the relevant Class responding to this question.

Table 5.6: Number of schools teaching non-examination subjects outside main lesson blocks by subject (Classes 9-12)

Most (86%) schools considered that they addressed issues of social diversity, through: topics in main lessons (86%), school events (72%), subject lessons (62%) .

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the curriculum as children grow older. Almost all of the schools give homework to children in Classes 1 to 5, usually for the older classes (Table 5.7). The most frequently cited homework task was spelling and times tables. 'Other' homework tasks include drawing, making a map, collecting specimens, and finishing classwork.

schools giving homework to Classes 1 to 5 comprises:	86%	(n=21)
spelling/tables	89%*	
extension of main lesson	74%*	
occasional tasks	71%*	
maths problem	68%*	
writing story	42%*	
other	53%*	(*n=19)

Table 5.7: Homework (Classes 1 to 5)

In Class 6, which is equivalent to the first year of secondary schooling in the maintained sector (Year 7), 75% of schools significantly increase homework (Table 5.8). This comprises a range of tasks, mainly set by subject teachers, most often in modern foreign languages as well as maths, English and other subjects. Homework tasks also include extension of the main lesson and formal 'head tasks'[35] in English and maths.

Hours per week set for Class 6 range from 0.6 to 5.5 hours, which amounts to an average of 2.6 hours of homework per week[36]. The number of nights per week that homework is set for Class 6 ranges from two to eight (average four nights per week)[37].

schools significantly increasing homework to Class 6	75%	
Class 6 homework comprises:		
work set by subject teachers	94%	
extension of main lesson	88%	
formal 'head task' in English	81%	
formal 'head task' in maths	75%	
other formal work set by class teacher	63%	
other	25%	(n=16)

Table 5.8: Homework (Class 6)

Most schools (71%)[38] affirm that from Class 7 above there is a further significant increase in homework.

5.2.2 Good practice (curriculum)

The Curriculum and Child Development The Steiner curriculum is based on what Steiner indicated would be appropriate for children of each age in accordance with his view of child development.

The main claim to good practice would be:

- The curriculum is based on a highly detailed understanding of the changing interests of the child during different periods of development. In music, for example, pupils would study the terraced dynamics of baroque composition at a time in their development when they see things in stark contrasts and the turbulence of Romantic composers such as Berlioz at a time when they go through affective upheavals in their own lives. In Class 3, pupils ideally study farming and building because Steiner indicated that at this time they are developing a new kind of interest in the way humankind makes the world a comfortable place to live in.

[35] 'Head tasks' refer to work that would be done mentally and through a greater use of the pupils' newly awakening thinking abilities.
[36] The base for these calculations is 16.
[37] The base for these calculations is 14.
[38] Fourteen schools responded to this question.

Outdoor Work in Class 3

Classes 3 and 4 (Year 4 and 5) were combined at this small, new rural school. A parent, who was a local organic gardener, had collaborated with the class teacher on planning a unit of outdoor work which involved working for several weeks to create a complete village community in a local copse. The previous week the pupils had worked in the classroom preparing drawings and plans to show how they would create a community of buildings in the copse. They had excitedly discussed the need for different kinds of shelter – communal ones and private ones. Today, they went to the copse and began clearing sites for where they would build their shelters, creating a series of "streets" that would link the various different shelters together by clearing the undergrowth.

Science for all in Class 12

All pupils at this large, mature school continued to study science in what would be the sixth form of a maintained school. The GCSE science set had completed double award science in one year, after commencing their studies a year later than their peers in the maintained sector. These pupils were now united with the rest of their class for a science main lesson that covered the topic of stem cell research. The approach adopted was one that made science ideas relevant to modern living and accessible to all pupils (sometimes referred to as "citizen science"), as opposed to a more technical science for pupils choosing to specialise in science subjects at "A" level. The teacher explained that Steiner had indicated that this was an appropriate age for pupils to begin to make judgements on the basis of the analysis of rational evidence. He described the way in which science was made accessible to all pupils, including those who had not done GCSE.

Breadth and Balance There are two principal claims to good practice with regard to curriculum breadth:

- The Steiner curriculum bridges the academic/vocational divide and aims to produce rounded, resourceful and free thinking citizens who are also versatile in manual skills. There is hence a strong emphasis on practical skills and an objection to the premature use of ICT which, it is claimed, dis-empowers pupils through causing them to use computers before they can fully understand the actions that are carried out.

- The Steiner curriculum offers all the subjects up to Class 12 (Year 13). There is thus no opting out and early specialisation. It is considered that judgement develops and the mind broadens through continuing to study all the subjects. A pupil undertaking arts based A levels, for example, would continue to study science, music, religion and most other subjects.

Main Lesson in an Upper School

Class 11 (Year 12) consists this morning of 14 girls and six boys. Most will be taking five GCSEs but are continuing to follow the Steiner curriculum at the same time. The schedule for the day is a Steiner main lesson, followed by GCSE classes and in the afternoon music and eurythmy or Bothmer gymnastics from the Steiner curriculum. The current main lesson block is maths. After reciting the morning verse, the teacher reminds them that they have three drawings to complete in order to investigate the application of Pascal's theorem to hexagons. The pupils work for some time on their drawings until the teacher judges the time is right to remind them about not being stuck in Euclydian thinking. The idea of a freely drawn

hexagon within a conic section is introduced. The teacher asks them to prove that any six joined lines will produce the same result. The pupils are engaged by the task and one eventually discovers that all his points will meet on a line at the periphery and not infinity, a discovery that excites the teacher. The teacher then draws a cone on the board and introduces new work on how cutting the cone at various angles to the base will result in an ellipse or a parabola. The pupils are invited to experiment with this and extend the task into homework. The teacher gives individual help to a number of pupils who are encountering problems and judges that after an hour and fifteen minutes, their "minds are beginning to go". He terminates the lesson and invites the pupils to take a slightly extended break, during which time a discussion about Steiner schools in New Zealand and the funding of Camphill Communities develops.

Internationalism and Citizenship. The 23 English Steiner schools are part of an international movement of over 850 schools, and the research team found significant evidence of this fact in the range of teaching staff met by members of the research team. The research team spoke to teachers from New Zealand, South America and several mainland European countries found to be working in the schools as part of a general mobility of employment. The team also met pupils from European Steiner schools undertaking a period of study in England, and learned of reciprocal arrangements for English pupils. A special feature of the Steiner curriculum is the level of attention that is given to modern foreign languages. It was also possible to observe progression and development in the teaching of German and French from Class 3 upwards. Every school visited as part of the case studies employed modern foreign languages teachers with strong subject knowledge (often native speakers) to teach in the primary age range.

Progression in Modern Foreign Languages

Class 3 at an inner-city school included a number of EAL pupils. After morning break, a young male teacher with an accordion arrived to teach German. He began with a verse in German and warmed the children up with a lively rhythmic exercise, chanted to "Boome, tikka, tikka, boome" with much clapping and slapping. He then began telling them a story in German which was accompanied by acting and mime to reinforce the meaning. The children then quietened down to answer simple questions addressed orally in German to each at the throw of a bean bag. The children were then directed to rehearse a short play that had been introduced in a previous lesson. Some of the more complex directions were given in English. The play was then performed to the accompaniment of the accordion, the children joining in enthusiastically the German choruses.

Class 6 at another school contained three pupils who had recently transferred in from the maintained sector and not previously studied German. The lesson began orally with a German song led by the teacher and proceeded to a short, written vocabulary test during which the teacher sympathetically supported the new pupils. The bean bag technique was then employed to target individual pupils for oral questioning and answering on the theme of counting in German. The pupils enjoyed this and demanded more, but the lesson progressed to text work which required the pupils to translate orally a short written passage about Familie Grauschwanz (a family of rats). There were then some brief, written comprehension exercises.

Class 8 at a large school began their French lesson by singing the La Marseillaise. Individual pupils were then addressed with questions such as "Qu'est ce que vous desirez, Madam?" to which replies were given in French. Homework was returned and two common errors of the plural 's' and inversion were pointed out. The main new work of prepositions was then introduced. After a teacher exposition, pupils worked at written exercises which involved the composition of short sentences with prepositional phrases such as "pres de la gare". The lesson concluded with a brief plenary on the sentence composition and the giving out of a homework task of writing further sentences.

Class 11 at the same school were taking AS level German as an option. The group consisted of four girls and two boys, and the lesson took place in a small seminar room. Some of them had previously taken GCSE German. The teacher began the lesson by describing some study methods and stressing the value of these. He then assembled a story in German, partly telling it himself and partly asking pupils to contribute sentences about what happened next. An AS level essay that would be written next week was then discussed. Finally, a text, previously given to pupils to prepare for extended oral translation was introduced and pupils took turns to read and translate.

High Expectations. Pupils in Steiner schools are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the curriculum throughout their school careers. Teachers are resistant in their pedagogy to outside influences perceived as a potential bar to children's learning. For example, through liaison with families children were discouraged from spending too much time watching television or playing computer games. Ideas such as it being "uncool" for boys to participate in an activity such as singing, whilst acknowledged, are not considered relevant and pupils of both sexes did generally participate in the full range of academic, cultural, sporting and practical activities at all ages. The resistance to peer pressure is thus developed through the teachers' expectations that pupils will achieve well in all subjects regardless of popular attitudes or the status afforded to the subject by examinations. The claim for good practice would be that:

- Children and young people continue to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally in spite of the existence of anti-learning subcultures that young people encounter outside school.

Music in a Large School

Music was a strong feature in a large, mature school visited. The school had a well equipped large music room with a range of small practice rooms radiating out from it. Each of these was equipped with a piano. It was noted that during upper school assembly, all the pupils joined in singing in four part harmony. Very few pupils were seen to be participating with reluctance and all the boys identified themselves as either tenors or basses. During the class 11 music lesson, the pupils were first given vocal warm-up exercises by a choral trainer. The teacher then divided the pupils into groups of three and issued each group with a three part Morley canzonet. The groups of three (two girls and a boy, or two boys and a girl) dispersed to the practice rooms where they sight read and rehearsed the vocal lines without supervision. The pupils then reassembled in the main music room and rehearsed a performance of the canzonet they had been learning. The lesson then concluded with an enthusiastic class performance of J S Bach's Cantata 140, which included violin obligato by a male pupil.

Integration. The Steiner curriculum recognises both individual subjects and the integration of subjects. Its most significant feature is the daily main lesson in which a particular subject is studied in depth for about a month. Depending on the nature of the subject, varying degrees of cross-curricular working might be employed in main lessons. Progression of a subject in main lesson follows a spiral approach in that the subject is revisited progressively over the years as the pupils grow and develop. This process is informed by Steiner's advice on age-appropriateness. Thus the treatment of a subject whilst the pupils are 9 years of age would emphasise feelings and the aesthetic sense, whereas revisited in main lesson when the pupils are 14 years of age, the treatment would emphasise logic and reason more strongly.

In addition to the daily main lesson, pupils in all age groups from Class 1 to Class 13 also have a timetable of subject lessons. The degree of integration of subjects within main lesson depends on the nature of the topic studied, as does the degree to which main lesson content is reinforced by subject lesson content and vice versa. Strong links are frequently made for the exemplification of lesson content through practical situations and first hand experience. The claims for good practice would be:

- Through a long process of continuous curriculum development, a reservoir of accumulated knowledge exists with regard to when it is and is not effective to attempt cross-curricular work and subject integration.

- Cross-curricular work is as much a strength of upper school work as lower school work.

Farming in Class 3 The 9 year old pupils at an inner city school had travelled to East Sussex to visit a biodynamic farm where they had spent a week camping. They had previously held a practice camp in Epping Forest. During their main lesson, they first worked on a series of literacy tasks related to a piece of writing about farming that was developing in their main lesson books. The pupils recalled a previous day's work on "picture words", "doing words" and "naming words" and then searched through their writing to find examples of each. The teacher explained that the terms "adjective", "verb" and "noun" would be introduced the following year. This part of the main lesson concluded with word level work based on anagrams of farming related words. The teacher then moved the lesson on to a science focus where pupils worked in groups to observe the permeation by water of a range of soil samples. The pupils were encouraged to think about the soil they had handled on their farm visit, and to observe closely what happened when the added water drops to the samples on their desks.

German, Latin and Literacy in Class 6 The 12 year old pupils at a well-established school in a former area of heavy industry were working with their class teacher on an ancient languages subject lesson. The teacher was a German speaker (though not the class's subject teacher for German) and was keen to develop the pupils' awareness of language structure through a comparison of Latin, German and English. The lesson began with the pupils recalling the Lord's Prayer in Latin and identifying from it the various parts of speech. The teacher then led the class in writing a simple, though amusing story in Latin which held their attention and interest. Pupils were able to identify the meanings of Latin words such as fenestris by drawing on their knowledge of the French fenetre. There was significant discussion of the relationship between German, English and Latin, for example over the differences in use of pronouns. Pupils remained interested and engaged by the topic of language structure throughout the 40 minute lesson.

5.2.3 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (curriculum)

Although a cardinal principle of Steiner education is the creative freedom of the teacher in the classroom, the team found the curriculum and pedagogy to be recognisably similar in all schools and classes visited as part of the schools' survey. Members of the team were reminded also that this is an international curriculum that would be recognised by a pupil travelling to a Steiner school anywhere in the world[39].

[39] For instance, through an article titled "Months Away" a Class 9 pupil describes her exchange visit to a German Steiner school in a school newsletter.

Curriculum areas, such as maths, English, science, geography and history, are integral to the curriculum of the 15 schools which commented on the draft overview of the Steiner curriculum. The Steiner curriculum includes all the recognised subjects of the national curriculum in England. This is consistent with the aim of Steiner education to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

There is a degree of commonality between the Steiner and National Curriculum with regard to holistic education. The explicit concern in the maintained sector with matters such as moral and spiritual development and citizenship denote a concern with development and learning beyond the subjects of the National Curriculum. Equally, it is evident that the Steiner schools' emphasis and focus on holistic education is considerably more pronounced. Homework is a significant feature of Steiner schools as well as maintained schools.

There are certain differences which distinguish the Steiner curriculum from the national curriculum in England. One of the most significant is through the influence on Steiner of Goethe which leads, for example, to a view of science that stresses observation and imagination more strongly than would be the case in the National Curriculum. In addition, science is a curriculum area for all pupils throughout the years of schooling. Unlike the National Curriculum, which introduces the three main sciences of physics, chemistry and biology with approximately equal weighting at Key Stage One, the Steiner Curriculum focuses in the lower school on the life sciences, with some attention given to ecology. The teaching of physics does not begin until Class 6 (equivalent to the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum,) where the approach is influenced by Steiner's studies of Goethe and the principle that pupils progress from their studies of art to a more scientific study of colour, and from their studies of music to a more scientific study of acoustics. The pedagogy is weighted substantially more towards observation than would be the case in the National Curriculum, experienced and observed phenomena being regarded as the starting point rather than theoretical models. The approach to chemistry is different again. During the primary years, the emphasis is on the wholeness of living things and a reductionist view of matter associated with orthodox chemistry is generally avoided. Formal teaching of chemistry begins in Class 7 (equivalent to Year 8 in the National Curriculum) after an introductory year of geology in Class 6. Close observation of natural phenomena is again regarded as the foundation of later understanding, and discussion of the particle theory of matter is postponed until pupils have attained a mature level of reasoning in Class 11. Steiner's science curriculum is critical of the way atomic theory is presented in text books for younger pupils and emphasises the potential that too early an exposure to theoretical models has to generate misconceptions that will later stand in the way of understanding particle behaviour at atomic and sub-atomic levels.

There are also differences between Steiner and maintained schools in the approach to English. In Steiner schools the balance between oral and literary approaches to the teaching of English differs from the National Curriculum. Generally, there is less emphasis on the early attainment of reading and writing, but considerably more emphasis on oracy. Children in Classes 1 - 3 spend more time than their counterparts in the maintained sector on the development of speaking and listening skills, and activities such

as choral speaking and the recitation of verse continue to be important in the older classes. The view in Steiner education is that this emphasis on oracy underpins the ability to acquire functional literacy to support learning across the curriculum. Case study observations consistently revealed that Steiner pupils were confident in oral work and possessed high levels of skill in speaking and listening activities. Teachers were generally confident and skilled in promoting these. The claim for Steiner education would be that, as a result of the emphasis on oracy and the development of functional literacy, Steiner pupils will have achieved parity with pupils in maintained schools by the end of Key Stage 2 in this basic skill. Whilst the empirical findings reported cannot definitively confirm this claim, the skills in reading and writing observed during the case study suggest that parity was broadly achieved.

The level of attention that is given to modern foreign languages, and their introduction from Class 1, is another important feature of the Steiner curriculum. Research findings confirm progression and development in the teaching of German and French from Class 3 upwards. Additionally, every school visited employed modern foreign languages teachers with strong subject knowledge (often native speakers) to teach in the primary age range, reinforcing the strength of Steiner schools in this curriculum area.

Steiner education gives a much stronger emphasis to crafts and handwork, music, drama and practical activities such as gardening, forestry and building. The later introduction of computers and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is also an outcome of this emphasis especially for lower school pupils. Upper school pupils have access to computers and receive an ICT main lesson. ICT is seldom used before this because it is considered that the children have to learn to perform tasks for themselves first. For example, pupils would always learn to draw a graph manually or create a data base as a traditional card index before being introduced to the automated function. Pupils learn to draw maps from memory in order to develop their mental concepts of geography. Only when this has been achieved would a map -drawing software be used, the claim being that too early use of this software would damage the pupils' spatial awareness.

Another striking feature is the importance attached to art and the development of aesthetic sensibilities. The years for pupils aged between 7 and 14 are considered to be the time when pupils' aesthetic sensibilities are most strongly growing and developing, and the progression in artistic work displayed in the schools makes this apparent. This work, whilst having value for its own sake, is also extremely significant in developing pupils' attitudes and feelings for all the subjects. In the upper school, all pupils continue to study the arts subjects regardless of their preferences for specialisation, the Steiner curriculum retaining breadth and balance right up until age 18.

As well as covering the recognised subjects of the national curriculum in England, the Steiner curriculum includes subjects unique to the Steiner curriculum. For example, the presence of eurythmy, a particular form of expressive movement developed by Steiner that aims to integrate bodily movement with internal mental (or "soul") movement. The religious education lessons are also different from religious education (RE) classes in the

maintained sector[40]. Religious education lessons are not intended to nurture or indoctrinate pupils into a particular faith or denomination, nor are they primarily lessons *about* religion or different faiths. It was emphasised to the research team on field visits that the primary aim of these lessons is to develop in pupils a feeling for the religious dimension of life, for the working of the divine in nature and for good and evil and right and wrong. The focus is on developing an experiential relationship and awakening feelings to the spiritual, and encouraging openness to a spiritual interpretation of the world, rather than on cognitive learning – especially in the younger years. As with the other subjects, however, religion takes on a more analytical aspect as children progress through and beyond puberty. These descriptions exemplify the approach[41]:

> In looking at the soul development of children, Rudolf Steiner stressed the importance of nurturing the qualities of Goodness, Beauty and Truth in the three stages of childhood. Through the mood and content of the weekly religions lessons, we also seek to nurture the universal qualities of Wonder, Compassion and Conscience which relate to all human beings whatever their beliefs. To complement and enhance the lessons the school also offers regular Sunday services during term time. The religion lessons and the Sunday services change in character as the child progresses through the school. Thus, in accordance with the curriculum we aim to guide the children to an appreciation of the Divine, both in the world and in the human being.
> (School M {Kg-Class 13}, Curriculum downloaded from website, 5th Oct 2004, p. 3)

> Religion lessons are given to all classes. In the early years, man's search for the good is described through stories. A sense of wonder and reverence for humanity is awakened. Later on the events in Christ's life and those of other great spiritual leaders are described. The older children hear and discuss the biographies of men and women who have overcome great difficulties in their lives, often by calling on unimagined fonts of inner strength. A feeling for the religious experience of all mankind is fostered.
> (School F {Kg-Class 8}, School Prospectus, 2004, pp. 4-5)

> In our religion/ethics weekly lessons, we strive to lay the foundation of free spiritual judgement later in life. It is the mood of awe, wonder and reverence, which we strive to create in these lessons. The story material is drawn from all religions of the world, all cultures, all religions and the biographies of great leaders and personalities are presented to children of the higher classes… Because the curriculum covers the story of humankind from the beginning through the great mythologies, legends and sagas and on to written history, all the great religions are spoken about and acknowledged, not in a comparative but in a live, imaginative and thought-provoking way.
> (School T{Kg-Class 5}, School Prospectus, undated, p. 14)

There is further discussion of the Christian basis of Steiner educational philosophy in Section 5.6.3.

[40] Schools in their documentation, such as school prospectuses, often refer to 'religion lessons', which derives from Rudolf Steiner's original lectures and talks on the subject (Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship 2000).
[41] See also Appendix 8.

5.3 National tests

5.3.1 Survey findings (national tests)

GCSE examinations are taken by pupils in all the schools large enough to accommodate an upper school. Nine of the schools that participated in the survey teach GCSE courses. Three of these prepare their pupils for A levels (see Table 5.1).

It is evident that the distinctive Steiner curriculum continues to have a strong and pervading place in the life of the school during the years when the examination syllabuses are taught. Only one school stated that it gives greater weight to the examination curriculum. One indicated that it varies according to class. Most give equal emphasis (44%) or more emphasis (33%) to the Steiner curriculum[42]. All nine schools teaching GCSEs indicated that they continue to teach non-examination subjects outside main lessons. All upper school pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum (see Table 5.6). For example, arts students also study "citizens science".

Whilst it was emphasised that the broader, Steiner curriculum continues in the main lesson, most (89%) also indicated that some of the examination syllabus is taught through the main lesson[43] – for example, English, maths, and science. It was often stressed that the GCSE syllabus was covered in the main lesson where it was compatible with the Steiner curriculum. Much of the syllabus is therefore taught outside the main lesson, through subject lessons designed to enable completion of the necessary syllabus content. One school highlighted its 'revision' lessons aimed at assisting successful GCSEs.

The needs of the examination course and the requirements of the Steiner curriculum do not neatly complement each other. The tension between the two was especially highlighted in one school during a fieldwork visit. There attention was drawn to the different approach to science: the GCSE approach was described as focusing on models and hypotheses whilst the Steiner approach stresses development of observational faculties. It was also pointed out at the same school that gardening was absent from the upper school curriculum (Classes 9 to 12) mainly because of the need to accommodate the GCSE syllabuses.

Strategies to reduce the tension and maximise the space to continue the Steiner curriculum, and to facilitate successful completion of GCSEs, include:

- pupils taking a relatively small number of GCSEs. In one school, for example, three subjects only are taken (English language, English literature, and maths). The average number of GCSEs per pupil being taken in 2004/05 varied amongst the schools which answered this question: three subjects in two schools, five subjects in one school and seven subjects in three schools.

[42] The base for these percentages is nine.
[43] The base for these percentages is nine.

- staggering GCSEs over three years. Two schools indicated that they do this. In this strategy, pupils take some (two-year) GCSE courses over Classes 9 and 10 and some over Classes 10 and 11. One school doing this is currently reviewing its policy as it creates a pressure during the overlap year in Class 10. In other schools, the age at which pupils begin GCSE was given as 14 (2 schools), 15 (3 schools) and 16 (1 school).

Five schools responded that all pupils in a class are entered for GCSEs. Two schools indicated that not all pupils would be entered necessarily, and two did not respond. Eight of the schools teaching GCSEs indicated that they have, for the academic year 2004/05, SEN pupils studying for GCSE examinations[44]. The number of SEN pupils studying for their GCSEs ranged between one and seven pupils per school.

GCSEs offered in the academic year (2003/04) which pupils are studying, beginning Autumn 2004) are shown in Table 5.9. Most schools indicated that the GCSE courses last two years (Schools V, R, N, M, and L). School S indicated that all subjects were undertaken in one year[45].

School R	School S	School C	School V	School D	School L	School J	School N
Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
English	English	English	English[6]	English	English	English	English
Science[1]	Science[3]	Science[5]		Science[5]	Science[1]		
French	French	French	French	French	French	French	
German	German	German	German	German	German	German	
Art	Art[4]	Art	Art				
				Art&Design	Art&Design		
Music			Music				
	Geography						
History	History	History					
Graph. C.[2]							
		ICT					

Notes:
1. Offered as separate subjects: biology, chemistry and physics.
2. Graphic communication.
3. Single and double science.
4. Three options are offered: 3D, Drawing and Painting, and Textiles.
5. Double science.
6. School V did not specify if English language and literature were offered. The other schools offering English all stated English language and literature.

NB No data were received from School M with regard to GCSEs being studied in 2004/05.

Table 5.9: GCSEs being studied in 2004/05

All pupils entered for GCSEs over the years 2000 to 2004 are shown for each school, together with the number of pupils with A*-C passes in Appendix 5. These show consistent success in Maths and English, in that most pupils entered gain good passes (i.e. grade C or above), as well as generally good passes in modern foreign languages, with some lower pass rates such as School D's results in French. Fewer schools have pupils

[44] One school did not respond to this question.
[45] The remaining schools did not supply this information or the data were unclear.

taking science GCSEs, though pass rates are generally good with some noteworthy variations such as School M's biology results and School S's double and single science results in 2003. Although not all schools enter pupils for art or art-related subjects, the pass rates are consistently good, as they tend to be for history as well. It is interesting to note that School M has entered pupils for GCSE in ICT in 2003 and 2004 with good pass rates. In those schools which calculate the numbers of pupils passing five or more A*-C GCSEs, two-thirds or more of pupils achieved five or more A*-C GCSEs in 2004 (see Section 5.3.3).

A level courses being undertaken by pupils, beginning Autumn 2004, are shown in Table 5.10. This table shows a concentration on maths, English, modern foreign languages, science, art and history, with an option to take sociology in School L.

School C		School L	
Maths	(AS/A2)	Maths	(AS)
English	(AS/A2)	English Lit.	(AS/A2)
Chemistry	(AS/A2)	Chemistry	(AS)
Physics	(AS/A2)		
Biology	(AS/A2)		
French	(AS)		
German	(AS/A2)	German	(AS)
Art	(AS/A2)	Art	(AS/A2)
History	(AS)	History	(AS)
Spanish	(AS)		
		Sociology	(AS)

AS is the first year of the two-year course to A level standard. A2 is the second year.
NB No data were received from School M with regard to A level courses begun in 2004/05.

Table 5.10: A level courses begun by pupils at the start of the 2004/05 academic year

A level results from 2000 to 2004 are shown in Appendix 6. These show the most consistent numbers of pupils taking and passing AS and A2 levels in maths, English literature, individual science subjects, French, and German. Numbers are also successfully entered for subjects related to the arts, including art, art and design, performance studies and music. There are occasional entries (almost all passing) in subjects such as environmental science, Dutch, Japanese and design and technology.

One of the three schools offering A levels indicated that they have pupils of sixth form age (Classes 11 and 12) not taking examinations, whilst the other two schools indicated that all were working towards examinations.

Three schools (two of the schools providing A level courses and one which provides GCSE courses but not A levels) also offer Open College Network (OCN) awards. A fourth school[46] indicated that it is considering offering OCN awards. OCNs are part of the National Open College Network, a body regulated by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in England. OCN awards provide flexible forms of accreditation which formally recognise the achievements of adult learners on courses that do not lead

[46] This school is one of the three schools offering A levels for its pupils.

to a traditional qualification. Data were supplied by two of the schools on subjects awarded (Tables 5.11 and 5.12). Level 2 is equivalent to GCSE and Level 3 to AS level.

	Number of pupils gaining Level 2
Introduction to woodwork	18
Pottery essentials	15
Book-binding	10
Chemistry	4
Drama	9
Fleece	8
Practical skills	16
Art of craft	8
Sculpture	15
Batik	13

Table 5.11: Pupils gaining OCN awards, 2004, in School N

	Number of pupils gaining:		
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fine woodwork	-	-	2
PE	-	-	3
Narrative tradition	11	2	-
History of Drama	4	8	-
Expressive English	9	-	-
Myth to literature	4	9	-
Creative performance/skills	-	25	6
World at work	1	2	-
Study skills	-	7	5
Creative performance/practical skills	-	-	1
From text to stage	-	-	6
Independent project	-	-	1

Table 5.12: Pupils gaining OCN awards in School C, 2004

None of the schools keeps track of pupils' progression after they leave their school.

Teachers reported that pupils in the schools visited were often able to study A level courses in further education (FE) colleges quite successfully without first having taken the subject as a GCSE.

5.3.2 Good practice (national tests)

Alternative Assessment Practice. National tests are regarded as taking away time from the teaching of the Steiner curriculum. Assessment is integral to the Steiner approach and national tests are not necessarily seen as helpful. In Steiner school education assessments that have no formative function are considered unhelpful and normative assessments that rank children counter-productive. Hence, summative methods are not applied as part of the Steiner pedagogy.[47] Steiner himself was not completely opposed to schools outside Germany drawing on the assessment practices of the countries in which they were located.

[47] This issue will be further elaborated on in Section 5.3.3.

Teachers regularly read children's main lesson books and give formative feedback on the basis of this. Lesson tasks are often designed to allow the teacher to observe how the children are progressing, and this process is aided considerably by the knowledge the teacher has of the pupils through knowing them over an extended period of time. Pupils might take a GCSE in one year, in which case the teacher would draw on his or her knowledge of what the pupils will have learned through the Steiner curriculum in selecting an accelerated pathway through the GCSE syllabus.

The claims for good practice would be:

- A compromise is reached whereby some benchmarking against national standards is achieved without unduly compromising the international curriculum of the Steiner schools whilst meeting the needs of the learners.

- Pupils develop the study skills and attitudes that enable them to tackle a GCSE or other public examination quickly when the need arises.

GCSE Science in Class 11 After the morning's main lesson in a large, mature school, the class split into GCSE option sets. Three girls and 6 boys had chosen GCSE chemistry. One year had been allowed for the GCSE course, which the pupils undertook in the year equivalent to Year 12 in the maintained sector. The topic was organic chemistry and the bonding of hydrocarbon chains. The teacher referred frequently to previous main lesson work on atomic theory when introducing new work on the alkane series, isomers and then the alkene series. Pupils worked with molecule modelling materials to discover a set of logical rules for the molecular structure of the various series. During this exercise, pupils raised a number of questions about bonds, which the teacher answered by referring the pupils back to their previous year's main lesson books. Pupils were engaged by the tasks and forward in raising a number of questions about points of understanding.

5.3.3 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (national tests)

Steiner schools' policy and practice in relations to national tests and examinations has to be understood in the context of Steiner education's overall approach to assessment (discussed in detail in within Section 5.4). The Steiner curriculum is continuous from Class 1 to Class 12 (ages 6 – 18) and is considered sufficient to allow the developing young person to grow towards maturity. Summative assessments are considered unhelpful and normative assessments that rank children inappropriate. However, formative assessments developed along the lines suggested by Steiner have been well established over a number of decades. The emphasis is upon the individual development of each child. Steiner emphasised the continual need for child study and pedagogical meetings at which this is an agenda item and which are held regularly in all the schools.

As noted in reporting survey findings, there is a significant variation between schools in the approach to accommodating GCSE teaching alongside the Steiner curriculum. Generally, it can be expected that in all the schools pupils will take fewer GCSEs, generally later than their counterparts in the maintained sector. This is partly because the

schools are small and constrained in their ability to timetable a wide range of GCSE teaching. To a small degree, it is because pupils commence the formal curriculum a year later than in the maintained sector. However, the difference in approach to GCSEs is mainly to do with the principled objections to the practice of the testing of pupils by external agencies which have no knowledge of their individual development.

In theory, the GCSE and A level examinations are considered superfluous as the Steiner Curriculum provides a complete education up to age 18. Schools enter pupils for GCSE and A level examinations because this offers some reassurance to parents, the pupils themselves and the other schools, FE colleges or higher education (HE) institutions to which pupils might proceed. Steiner himself indicated that some acknowledgement of whatever national system operated should be made[48].

The pressure to take GCSEs comes in part from parents but often, it was discovered, from the pupils themselves. The team was informed that pupils of around 15 years of age began to become anxious about benchmarks through which they could measure their performance against maintained sector peers. The pupils were aware through social interaction that their peers in maintained schools were taking up to 10 or more GCSEs and began to ask questions about why they were not. Conversations with a number of pupils confirmed that this was indeed the case. This could be a difficult time for the schools although most pupils were successfully counselled through this period.

The team's attention was drawn to the successful progression of ex-Steiner pupils to higher stages of education without the need for examinations. Several of the larger schools visited reported that pupils were able to take or complete AS and A2 levels on the basis of the Steiner curriculum without necessarily having obtained GCSE passes in the subjects. In one school, pupils took only three GCSEs (English Literature, English Language and maths) yet successfully studied a wide range of A level subjects at the local FE college. The schools claimed that FE colleges particularly welcomed their pupils and this claim might profitably be investigated through further study.

Steiner schools' proportions of pupils gaining five good passes (A*-C grades in five subjects) cannot be straightforwardly compared with other schools in the published league tables in England. This is because the league tables are based on GCSE passes for the summer examinations taken by pupils who turn 16 years of age in the year prior to 31st August. In Steiner schools, however, there are two important differences. Firstly, pupils are generally entered for fewer GCSE subjects as the continuation of the broader Steiner curriculum is of paramount importance. Secondly, they do not sit all GCSE examinations in the same year of schooling as the mainstream sector (Year 11, equivalent to Class 10 in the Steiner school), but often start them later (as reported above). Some

[48] In New Zealand an *advocacy package* produced by the school is accepted as the basis of a young person's entry to university. Instead of taking public examinations equivalent to GCSE or A level, pupils complete a final year project on the subjects they would like to study and produce a referenced paper on it that is taken to university along with the school's profile report. This system has been accepted through negotiation by several New Zealand universities. A similar arrangement was successfully trialled in England with the Roehampton Institute, University of Surrey.

schools calculate the five A*-C pass rate of pupils (whatever their age) taking GCSE examinations in a year. For School C in 2004, 75% of pupils taking GCSEs gained five or more A*-Cs; in schools L and M in the same year, 83% and 68% respectively of their Class 11 pupils gained five or more A*-C passes[49]. This compares with a national average in 2004 of 54%. Caution is needed in drawing conclusions from a comparison of the figures, however, as further data and analysis would be needed to establish to what extent the differences were an effect of the school or an effect of other factors. These factors could include possible differences in the socio-economic characteristics and ability range of pupils as between Steiner schools and the general population of GCSE-taking pupils. However, there is currently no information available that would enable an analysis of these factors to be undertaken.

5.4. Pedagogy

5.4.1 Survey findings (pedagogy)

Foundations

All schools agree that the grounding of teaching in a view of child development is a distinctive feature of Steiner education. Most acknowledge that there have been changes in children since Steiner was developing his ideas: either the view was that children had changed considerably (19%) or, more often, that they had changed in some ways but not essentially (57%). There is agreement that, despite these changes, Steiner's understanding of child development remains largely valid. Most consider that this remains either *totally* valid (38%) or valid *in its important fundamentals* (48%).

Perceived distinctiveness of Steiner education

As noted, Steiner education's grounding in child development is seen as an important distinctive feature. Other distinguishing features include the place of narrative in teaching and learning, the distinction between willing, feeling and thinking, the emphasis on the artistry of the teacher, and the organisation of teaching around the main lesson and subject lessons (Table 5.13).

fully agree that the following is a distinguishing character of Steiner pedagogy:	
Grounding in child development	100%
Role of narrative in teaching	95%
Willing/feeling thinking	95%
Artistry of teacher	95%
Main/subject lessons	90%
Attentiveness to children's spirituality	81%
Main lesson theme in subject lessons	76%
Same teacher class 1-8	71%

Table 5.13: Distinguishing features of Steiner pedagogy

[49] Source: documentation supplied by the schools.

Other important distinctive pedagogical features which were suggested by schools are:

- rhythm – i.e. the principles of shaping and pacing the lesson through different teaching approaches (Section 2.2) and the attention given to festivals at different points in the year .
- non-competitive atmosphere and fostering of co-operation: "A respect and co-operation that you actively foster".
- the importance of the 'inner work' of the teacher – i.e reflective activity through which the teacher deepens his or her understanding of child development through study, meditation, artistic activity, etc.
- the importance of close relationships within the school and between members of the school and parents – as one school described it, they are particularly attentive to "what passes between people".
- attention to the temperaments of the children. One school explained: "Attention to the temperaments as a key method of gaining children's enthusiastic listening".
- teachers working together to study children. This sort of collective and mutually supportive approach to considering and understanding the children in the school is known as child study within Steiner education.

Methods of classroom teaching

Whole class work and pupils working individually are more prevalent than teaching with groups. All of the 19 schools which responded agreed that whole class work is very important in Steiner pedagogy. Amongst other approaches, pupils working individually was affirmed as being often used (Table 5.14).

other pedagogical approaches *often* used:	
Pupils working individually	76%
Pupils in co-operative groups	57%
Work with groups [50]	43%

Table 5.14: Other pedagogical approaches than whole class work

The shape and pattern of the main lesson give expression to the importance attached to rhythm, one of the distinctive aspects of Steiner education noted above. The description of the main lesson given by one school exemplifies the kind of variety of activity involved: morning verse; rhythm time (more for younger years) (verses, music, movement) and physical activity; recall of previous day (oral and written) (interactive); teacher-led content; independent work (sometimes new content at end) e.g. according to subject. At another school, the upper school explained that the lesson always begins with the morning verse, followed by artistic activity (such as recitation, singing, movement) to awaken the pupils' ability and concentration; then recall of work from the day before, having 'slept on it'. This sequence gives the main lesson its essential shape and can be delivered in various styles, as can the activities which follow, including the presentation

[50] Pupils in co-operative groups means pupils working together on a task set but largely without the teacher, whereas work with groups means the teacher directly teaching a group of pupils as opposed to the whole class.

of new material. Whatever styles are used the balance of thinking, feeling and willing is essential.

The autonomy and creativity of the teacher in the classroom is a key feature of Steiner pedagogy. Schools were asked two specific questions about altering planned lessons: how often these were altered due to feedback from assessment and how often due to feedback from child study. The vast majority indicated that planned lessons were often or sometimes varied for these reasons: in just under a half of schools they were said to be often altered because of feedback from assessment (48%) or feedback from child study (43%). In two-thirds of schools, planned lessons were said to be varied for other reasons: in a third of schools this was often the case (33%). In explaining these other reasons, a substantial group of schools (eight specifically referred to this) suggested that lesson plans are changed in response to the class, i.e. as a result of questions or feedback from the pupils or an awareness that their need is for something different that day: reasons given included "feedback from pupils indicating special interest in a particular area", "during lessons… a pupil's question may adapt and change lesson", "where teacher feels the class are needing something else", "responding to state of class as they arrive", and "the mood of the class".

A range of approaches is used to deal with the differing abilities of pupils. The ones most often cited are additional support for tasks and differentiated, additional and extension tasks (Table 5.15).

pupils' different abilities tackled through :	
Additional support for tasks	100%
Differentiated tasks	95%
Additional tasks	95%
Extension tasks	91%
Additional resources/aids	81%
Enrichment tasks	81%
Tasks for learning styles	81%

Table 5.15: Differentiation by ability

One of the distinctive features of Steiner teachers' pedagogy is the minimal use of electronic equipment as teaching aids. This is confirmed by the survey findings with regard to TV/video and ICT (Table 5.16). Just over half use textbooks a lot. Whilst Steiner philosophy emphasises the direct work of the teacher in telling the pupils information orally, there is no objection to the use of books for reinforcement and practice activity, or occasionally to illustrate further what the teacher has told the class. Pupils will also use books themselves to find out further information, particularly for homework.

used *a lot*	lower school (classes 1-8)	upper school (classes 9+)
textbooks	52%	56%
TV/video	0%	0%
ICT	0%	11%
	(n=21)	(n=9)

Table 5.16: Use of teaching resources

Much importance is attached in Steiner teaching to using props and resources which are natural and which emphasise the value attached to handwork and development of aesthetic sensibilities. Props and resources used in the classroom include art materials (a high priority being attached to using fine quality materials), natural objects (such as crystals, pebbles, sand and nature displays), objects and implements that teachers and the children make themselves (such as times tables, modern language books, pencil cases), craft material (such as wool, modelling clay and beeswax), the traditional blackboard with drawings on which time is spent to make them colourful and aesthetically pleasing, and a host of other materials and resources such as recorders/flutes (made by the Camphill Community).

Assessment

Most schools either have an unwritten (38%) or written (33%) assessment policy, and almost all (95%) indicate that they have some common assessment procedures within the school. Most frequently, the common procedures cited were annual reports and assessment of Class 2 children by the SEN teacher/department. In three-quarters of schools, pupil progress is said to be a topic in teachers' meetings.

The main role of assessment is seen as being, to:

- support future learning (100%)
- assess healthy development (100%)
- assess that the child's needs are being met (100%)
- measure progress with Steiner benchmarks (81%)
- other (38%).

Pupils' progress is assessed through ongoing observations[51] and regular monitoring[52]. Schools indicated that ongoing observations were less likely to involve giving grades, though slightly over half nevertheless affirmed that grades are given. Ongoing observations include:

- attendance and punctuality (100%)
- completion of work (100%)
- unusual events (e.g. serious misdemeanour, family crisis, illness/injury) (100%)
- participation in lessons (100%)
- behaviour (95%)
- giving grades (52%)

All schools which answered the questions on regularly monitoring literacy and numeracy[53] and co-ordination and social skills[54] did so. In more than three-quarters of schools (16), it was affirmed that pupil progress is a topic for teachers' meetings,

[51] This was affirmed by all 21 schools.
[52] This was affirmed by all of the 20 schools which responded to the question on monitoring.
[53] Nineteen schools answered this question.
[54] Twenty schools answered this question.

comparing past and present learning in relation to goals of Steiner school teaching for that age.

In all 21 schools child studies are said to be used and to be effective. Class studies are almost as prevalent, with 19 schools indicating that class studies are used to assess progress. It has already been noted that in many schools planned lessons are altered as a result of feedback from child study. Child study takes place in teachers' meetings (see below). One school described how each fortnight at the teachers' meeting, a child will have been chosen for study. This could be because of a difficulty associated with him or her, or because the child is particularly "interesting". In the week prior to the teachers' meeting, teachers observe the child (in playtime, for example) and the class teacher brings information about the child and examples of his or her work. The child's parents are informed prior to the study. Child study may result in proposals for action, and sometimes it may be that the collective concentration on the child has an effect: as the school described it, child study may lead to "a huge difference in that child the following day" because they "feel" the love. The main interviewee in another school affirmed that meditative picturing of the child is a part of child study. The possibility that the collective attention to the child itself, aside from any action taken, may benefit the child was mentioned by teachers during other field visits to schools. School U, explains in its Parents' Handbook (undated, p. 11) that child study is not always for children with difficulties, but is also for ones "who may characterise a particular age or stage of development". These studies

> aim to build a shared picture of the child with the help of all members of staff so that greater understanding, helpful attitudes, and if appropriate, therapies can be recommended for the individual child.
> (School U's Parents' Handbook, undated, p11)

Another school explains that as a result of child study "particular awareness of a child is raised in the teaching body and/or specific pedagogical and therapeutic solutions are sought and implemented" (School R's Staff Handbook, July 2004, p. 26).

A large majority (89%) of the schools with an upper school (for pupils aged 14-19) indicated that student profiles are produced at the end of main lesson blocks for each arts/crafts/life skills course and termly for on-going subjects[55]. All of these eight schools include in the profiles subject-specific attainments, and seven include assessments of behaviour and motivation.

Most schools (86%) have learning support staff, and of these 18, all but one say learning support staff assist in assessment. In most schools too (71%), school doctors were said to assist with assessment[56].

Schools were asked about pupil involvement in assessing or evaluating their own learning (Table 5.17). Most schools encourage informal comments and questions from pupils and

[55] The base for this percentage is nine.
[56] Not all schools have a school doctor.

peer marking of work, the latter particularly from Class 6 upwards. A small minority encourage pupils to negotiate targets with teachers in Classes 1 to 5, though it rises to just over half in relation to older classes. 'Other ways' include pupils listening to each other and giving constructive criticism and reviewing their work at the end of the term/year. One school explained that "Pupils are asked to comment after main lesson (more in older classes); in younger [classes] teacher more likely to summarise". Another school drew attention to how, in the upper school particularly, pupils are involved in open discussion and expression (on current events and religion for example), read and present their work, look at each other's work, and engage in self-evaluation at the end of every main lesson.

	classes 1-5	classes 6+
informal comments encouraged	81%	87%
peer mark work	47%	69%
evaluate own work	43%	73%
general feedback invited	38%	73%
comment in home/school diary	19%	27%
negotiate targets with teachers	10%	53%
pupils select work to go in portfolio	5%	27%
post queries to teachers	5%	20%
other ways	24% (n-21)	27% (n=15)

Table 5.17: Pupil involvement in assessing or evaluating their own learning

Most Steiner schools also keep files on pupil. Pupils' files contain:

- termly/annual reports, student profiles (91%)
- documentation from previous schools (91%)
- notes on disciplinary situations (86%)
- learning support (formative assessment) reports (81%)
- records of behaviour (76%)
- records of events (such as a particular achievement or a serious misdemeanour) (67%)
- records of physical development (52%)
- school doctor's reports (57%)
- pastoral care reports (57%)
- records of temperament (43%)
- examples of work (not annotated) (43%)
- summary of any child study done in the teachers' meetings (38%)
- examples of work (annotated) (24%).

All 21 schools give written reports to parents/carers, most (67%) annually. All 19 schools which replied about the reports' contents stated that they contain the teacher's

characterisation of whole child and evaluation of progress. The latter evaluation covers the pupil's participation (attention span, co-operation and response), progress and ability in subjects, social behaviour, activity (presentation of work, tidiness, completed tasks), and aesthetic progression. All also include in the evaluation assessment of the pupil's age-appropriate ability to work independently.

Most reports to parents/carers also contain:

- a summary of the curriculum for the year (86%)
- a record of attainment in all subjects (71%)
- for younger children, something which is directed personally towards the child, such as a gift or painting (71%)
- for older children, a student profile for each subject (60%[57])
- for students graduating from the school, a detailed leavers' report (record of achievement) (71%[58]).

Most reports also contain an indication of future goals (86%) and outline how goals can be achieved (62%). Goals concern educational, social, personal or artistic aims for the pupil to give attention to, one school describing the goals as concerning "anything from learning to smile, being more caring, getting homework done, writing better". They are generally said to be expressed in positive and encouraging ways, including through narrative especially for younger pupils.

In a minority of schools the goals are said to involve an element of self-evaluation (38%). Just over a half indicated that future assessment is based on these goals (52%).

Demands on class teacher's knowledge

In the classic Steiner system, a class teacher takes the same class through from Class 1 to Class 8. This places demands on the class teacher's knowledge as he or she is responsible for the curriculum for that class from ages 6 to 14. Coping with the demands on class teachers' subject knowledge is seen as being done principally with the help of other teachers' support and by an emphasis on class teachers developing their own knowledge (Table 5.18). These are cited much more than the other options. Underlining the value placed on mutual support amongst teachers, some schools highlighted the importance of co-mentoring and observation of each others' classes. One school drew attention to its system of regular appraisals of teachers recommending support and teacher development programmes, and others referred to the encouragement given to go on courses, one specifying these as forming part of a teacher development plan.

[57] The base for this percentage is 15.
[58] The base for this percentage is 14.

Seen as *very important* :	
The other teachers being available for support/consultation	91%
Class teachers developing own knowledge as the children grow older	86%
Some subjects being taught by specialists	33%
Specialists taking main lesson block	28%
Teachers swapping classes to play to their strengths	14%
Other	15%

Table 5.18: Ways of dealing with demands on teachers' subject knowledge

Discipline

Problems in pupils' acceptance of the class teacher as an authority figure were seen as most likely occurring in Classes 6, 7 and 8 (Table 5.19).

Classes	
1	5% (n=21)
2	0% (n=21)
3	24% (n=21)
4	24% (n=21)
5	10% (n=20)
6	63% (n=16)
7	62% (n=13)
8	69% (n=13)

Table 5.19: Where problems in pupils' acceptance of the *class teacher* as an authority figure are most likely occur

These are the years that correspond to Key Stage 3 in the maintained sector and therefore the time when pupils cease to be with the same class teacher all day, as in primary schools. In most maintained schools (though not necessarily middle schools, where these exist) Year 7 is seen as an appropriate time to move on from the secure base of the primary class. Steiner emphasised that at this age, a new spirit of independence and desire to be in control begins to awaken in the child and suggested that the continued influence of the class teacher is necessary to help the child through this difficult transition. The case studies (see Section 5.4.2) confirm that most, though not all, class teachers are successful in this, but it is certainly a time when pupils are more likely to challenge their teacher.

Problems were said to occur in relation to the authority of subject teachers in 71% of schools. This was described as being most likely in Classes 9 particularly, then it is seen as equally as likely in Classes 6, 7, 8 and 10 (Table 5.20). Class 9 is the first year in which pupils cease to have a class teacher and have, instead, a class guardian. The class guardian would normally be an upper school teacher who takes on the role of pastoral carer and adviser to a class that has passed beyond the class teacher years. The class guardian would remain with the class during the time in upper school and develop a supportive relationship with them.

Classes	
6	69% (n=13)
7	70% (n=10)
8	70% (n=10)
9	86% (n=7)
10	71% (n=7)
11	33% (n=12)
12	33% (n=12)

Table 5.20: Where problems in pupils' acceptance of the *subject teacher* as an authority in their subject are most likely occur

Schools explained that problems in a subject teacher being accepted as an authority are dealt with in a variety of ways. These include seeking the support of the class teacher (up to Class 8) and of other teachers, having a support group for subject teachers, liaising with parents, collective discussion in the college or other teachers' meeting, working with the support of a mentor, and dialogue with the pupils.

Disruption by a pupil is seen as being more likely to occur with a subject teacher than a class teacher (Table 5.21). Subject teachers are also seen as more likely to experience an unruly class (Table 5.22). The case studies confirm quite strongly that this is because the class teacher knows the pupils better, and the pupils often feel more secure with the teacher they have known well for a significant proportion of their lives. Another reason would be that class teachers are often more skilful in class control than some subject teachers who might be chosen for their expert subject knowledge rather than their expertise in class and pupil management.

	class teacher	subject teacher
never	0%	0%
occasionally	57%	14%
sometimes	33%	48%
often	10%	24%

Table 5.21: Perceived frequency with which the challenge of *particularly disruptive pupils* arises in classes, comparing class and subject teachers

Steps taken to deal with *particularly disruptive pupils* were said to be:

- raise the matter at a teachers' meeting (100%)
- examine why this behaviour is occurring (100%)
- talk to the parents (100%)
- meditative picturing of the child (100%)
- talk to child (100%)
- reformulate lesson content and/or emphasis (86%)
- apply appropriate punishment (81%)
- other (62%).

The ‘other’ steps were stated to include child study, temporary withdrawal from lesson, home visits, talking to the child (especially through “remedial stories”[59]), expecting the child to come to school early to develop relationships and establish a focus on learning, eurythmy therapy, referral to the school doctor, seeking advice from outside agencies actively appreciating the child’s positive behaviour, removing the child from the class for a time (e.g. to work in another room or be taken on by another teacher), and being given classroom tasks (e.g. fetching the register).

	class teacher	subject teacher
never	14%	0%
occasionally	67%	29%
sometimes	5%	52%
often	0%	5%

Table 5.22: Perceived frequency with which the challenge of *an unruly class* arises in classes, comparing class and subject teachers

Steps taken to deal with *an unruly class* were said to be:

- raise the matter at a teachers’ meeting (100%)
- examine why this behaviour is occurring (100%)
- talk to children (95%)
- meditative picturing of child (91%)
- reconsider own approach (91%)
- ask for advisory , mentoring help (86%)
- talk to parents (76%)
- supplement with different teachers (67%)
- whole class punishment (67%)
- hand over to different teacher (52%)
- other (43%).

The ‘other’ steps included class study, assessment by an adviser from outside the school, consultation with the school doctor, home visits, the class teacher accompanying children to subject lessons and remedy rather than punishment (e.g. extending a disrupted lesson so that work can be done, with the emphasis on making up for what has been done), and could include taking steps to consider as a last resort the need to terminate the employment of a member of staff whose teaching is persistently poor.

For most schools (71%) attendance of pupils is not a problem. Five schools described it as a problem, one of these indicating that it is a substantial issue. Of the five for which attendance is perceived as a problem, all indicated that the main reasons given for absence is sickness and medical appointments, whilst all but one also indicated that family holidays are also given as a reason.

The great majority of schools (86%) indicated that pupils are sometimes excluded. In two of the schools it was said that pupils were never excluded. Details of numbers of

[59] The emphasis on narrative in Steiner pedagogy includes techniques such as placing the child’s behaviour in the context of a story that would encourage the child to confront and reflect on the behaviour.

exclusions in the 2003/04 academic year are shown earlier in Table 5.1. Reasons for exclusion are predominantly to do with behaviour. For example, schools explained:

> Serious breaches of discipline usually compounded by no willingness on the part of the pupil to acknowledge and address the issues.
>
> Very disruptive behaviour upsetting the children of that class and parents.
>
> Violent/abusive behaviour; smoking/drugs/alcohol violations.

Asked directly if exclusion would be considered an appropriate option for a pupil whose behaviour was significantly damaging the welfare of other pupils, all 19 which answered indicated 'yes'. Other reasons for exclusion include assessment that the child is not benefiting from Steiner education (3 schools), the child not fitting into class (2 schools, one explaining "Parents weren't frank about the children's problems. We can't meet the needs – if a new child upsets dynamic"), and parents' inability to pay school fees (2 schools).

Awareness of developments in the maintained sector

The degree to which teachers' meetings are perceived to be aware of developments in the maintained sector varies significantly according to the topic (Table 5.23).

Foundation Stage	67%
National Literacy Strategy	62%
National Numeracy Strategy	57%
Emotional intelligence	52%
Citizenship & PSHE	52%
Multiple intelligence / differentiated learning styles	43%
KS3 strategy	38%
Schools Councils	38%
ICT in schools	38%
Sustainable development education	33%
Study support	33%
Thinking skills / cognitive acceleration	19%
Extended schools	19%

Table 5.23: Awareness of teachers' meetings of developments in maintained sector

Where schools were aware of developments in the maintained sector, 56% replied that the teachers' meeting would *perhaps* consider the appropriateness of developments for assimilation into Steiner pedagogy[60]. The elaboration of this response varied amongst schools. Some (3 schools) emphasised that use or adaptation would be a matter for individual teachers. Various developments were mentioned as being initiatives that were being or might be considered for assimilation, particularly the literacy and numeracy strategies and mainstream use of ICT. One school indicated that:

[60] The base for this percentage is 18.

> We already use material for literacy/numeracy and Key Stage 3 as we only go to Class 8. We do prepare the children to enter mainstream education. Children from our school go mainly to [the local maintained sector school].

Another explained that the school would be open to considering "those aspects of pedagogy which affect our quality of teaching, i.e. improvements in delivery, meeting different needs, health and safety and equal opportunities". The only school that responded that it is definitely open to considering the appropriateness of developments for assimilation into Steiner pedagogy explained:

> Research for curriculum development is essential in Steiner Waldorf education. We are open to considering the appropriateness of all and any developments which can enrich our approach.

A large minority (38%) use published tests, such as those produced by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). This is because periodic class profiling, often by the teacher with SEN responsibility, is considered important.

5.4.2 Good practice (pedagogy)

Grounding in Child Development. An understanding of child development according to anthroposophical principles is central to Steiner education. Two key implications emerge from this for teaching. Pedagogy and curriculum must be in harmony with the different phases of development children are believed to go through; and curriculum activities are undertaken for their value in developing the child's soul, not for their potential future utility, since the task of the teacher is to help each child's soul and spirit grow[61].

The claims for good practice would be:

- Teachers are well informed about child development and structure their lessons so as to fulfil the learning needs of children as defined by their age and stage of development.

- The curriculum and pedagogy are driven by the higher values and goals of education for the freedom of individual thought rather than the utilitarian ends of economic rationalism.

The Dawn of Thought in Class 6. Class 6 in Steiner education corresponds to the transition to secondary schooling in mainstream education, and much has been written about the continuity between Year 6 and Year 7. In Steiner's view, significant changes begin in children at around this time. Whereas previously, feelings and the development of the aesthetic sense were dominant, the 11/12 year olds begin to discover the power of the intellect, and this gives them a new desire to control their world. This is reflected in the curriculum where subjects such as Roman law are studied and physics introduced. In games, the emphasis changes from "*imaginative games that follow a story … that they can walk in and out of … to competitive sport that follows rules*". The child wants to ally his or her will forces with science and technology to

[61] The terms "soul" and "spirit", though used interchangeably in common parlance have specific, technical meaning in Steiner's thought. See Section 2.2.

shape the world and this is reflected in the introduction of woodwork and the study of minerals. It was said to us that whilst Class 3 can be a crisis for the child, Class 6 can be a crisis for the teacher. Researchers were interested to compare class and subject teaching at a time that is critical in maintained schools also – the transition to Year 7 and secondary specialists. In the words of an experienced class teacher whose own class was undergoing this transition "*Oh it's been very marked this year. I could see the roots when I took them camping in Class 5, but it arrived with a vengeance in Class 6. They started rebelling against some teachers. They chose a teacher with whom they felt so secure to have their little coup d'etat. We got over it, meetings with parents for particular children, but the teacher had been teaching them for years. It's very different to Class 3. Then, if they're larking about, there's a lot of forgiveness. It changes up the school. You've got to nail them. As a subject teacher, I've often been quite fierce with Class 6s. But you will have observed that I give them some breathing spaces." "Do you mean 'breathing' in any technical sense?" "Oh yes. Good old Dr Rudolf said, one kind of activity for incarnating, that could be singing, followed by excarnating.*" The process of this transition continues during the last three class teacher years (Classes 6 – 8) and the dynamic between class and subject teaching at this time was particularly interesting. The balance of evidence, it was felt, justified the retention of a class teacher to the end of Class 8 (Year 9) [see also 5.6.2 *Puberty in Three Schools*].

Assessment Practice. As mentioned earlier, assessment is integral to the Steiner approach and national tests are not necessarily seen as helpful. Assessments that have no formative function are considered unhelpful in Steiner school education. Furthermore, normative assessments that rank children are believed to be counter-productive. Hence, summative assessment methods have only a small part to play in Steiner pedagogy.

The claims for good practice would be:

- Pupils develop high self-esteem and good levels of self-confidence without competitive testing.
- Teachers know their pupils well and plan individually for them.
- Formative assessment that concentrates on planning and developing future learning is dominant.

Pedagogical Study and Geography in Class 7 Teachers at a regular after-school pedagogical meeting studied a lecture by Steiner on opposite polarities in children, such as "imagination rich/imagination poor". The discussion progressed to consideration of Steiner's advice on the relationship between temperaments, physical bodies and different learning styles that the teachers had observed in their classes. Strategies for promoting learning in children with different polarities of strength were discussed, and one child was studied in confidence as exemplification. The following day in a Class 7 main lesson on geography, the teacher progressed a formative assessment task which was supporting learning of the shape and distribution of continents and oceans and the effects of this on world climate. Pupils used their artistic skills to draw maps from memory and the teacher had collected the results of two similar exercises undertaken previously. These were analysed by the teacher in order to monitor the progression in the pupils' ability to internalise a map of the world and individual pupils were given different support tasks according to the learning needs and qualities they were exhibiting.

Main Lessons and Subject Lessons. The structure of a two hour main lesson followed by four or five subject lessons for all age groups is unique to Steiner education. Its operation is illustrated in Table 5.24.

Class 1 (Key Stage 1) *Age 6+*	Class 4 (Key Stage 2) *Age 9+*	Class 7 (Key Stage 3) *Age 13+*	Class 11 (Key Stage 4) *Age 17+*
09.00 Main Lesson (maths) 11.00 Snacks/break 11.30 Double handwork No afternoon break	09.00 Main Lesson (science) 11.00 Snacks/break 11.30 French Lunch 13.30 Drawing 14.30 Eurythmy	08.35 Main Lesson (geography) 10.30 Snacks/break 11.00 Double lesson, options of woodwork, painting, handwork Lunch 13.45 Maths 14.30 French	08.55 Main Lesson (maths) 10.10 Snacks/break 10.50 GCSE sets 12.15 Music 13.50 German (AS) or Art 14.45 Games or Eurythmy

Table 5.24: Typical days from classes showing equivalent maintained sector Key Stages in brackets

The claims for good practice would be:

- There are opportunities for the continuous, deep level study of a specific topic, which includes the possibility of cross-curricular working and subject integration.
- There is a simultaneous programme of continuous development of key skills such as numeracy.
- The school day follows a well established, predictable routine that offers good pace and is sensitive to the working patterns of different age groups.
- There is a continuity of practice that avoids the disruption of primary-secondary transfer.
- Younger children benefit from the expertise of subject specialist teachers – particularly in the areas that are traditionally difficult for a generalist teacher e.g. music, art, gymnastics, modern foreign languages.
- Children of secondary school age benefit from the care of a class teacher (later class guardian in the upper school) who knows them very well and helps them through the difficulties of puberty and adolescence.

Pace and Rhythm. Pace in Steiner pedagogy is governed by a strong sense of rhythm that is pervasive throughout the schools. It features at the micro level in the use of rhythmic actions, including stamping and clapping, to reinforce the learning of multiplication tables and number bonds. At the macro level, much attention is paid to the observance of seasons and festivals, or four week main lesson blocks. The two hour main lesson is itself characterised by rhythmic shape in tune with the developmental age of the children. In main lesson, an emphasis is based on achieving an appropriate balance of mental and physical activity, of listening and recalling, of book work and singing. Steiner emphasised the need for "breathing in" and "breathing out" in lessons. Main lessons themselves have a two or three day rhythm which makes use of brain activity that occurs during sleep. This relates to the important idea of *telling*, *recall* and *bookwork*. Pupils are not expected to make notes whilst the teacher elaborates on a topic – it is

considered that this would get in the way of their imagining and picturing. So there will be a time when the teacher talks and the pupils listen in silence. The following day, after sleep, the teacher will question the pupils who then recall what they were told the previous day, having made the interpretation their own. During bookwork, pupils will work at various individual tasks, usually undertaken in silence. Silent activity by pupils is governed by further principles of rhythmic balance. For example silently composing writing, working out mathematical problems or painting are all different kinds of activity in the rhythmic attentiveness of Steiner pedagogy.

The claims for good practice would be:

- Individual lessons have an optimal pace that is based on close attentiveness to the natural rhythms of the human body and mind.

- Effective use is made of mental processes occurring outside formal teaching, including the period when pupils are asleep.

Table 5.25 illustrates this through comparing the pace of a typical main lesson with 9 year olds (Class 4) and 14 year olds (Class 8). Both lessons begin with a ritual in which the teacher greets each pupil with an individual hand shake. This opportunity is used to make contact with each pupil, perhaps dealing with any personal matters or noting anything unusual about each pupil's emotional presentation. More time is given to this in the younger class where the teacher sings to the pupils who sing back during the taking of the register. In the older class, the teachers simply call names. Both classes recite a morning verse[62], which is universal practice in the schools, though there are slight variations to the verses as they are used in different schools.

Both classes spend time on learning and recalling multiplication tables and number facts at the beginning of the lesson. For the older class, this is done purely mentally and orally. The younger class, however use a variety of actions, gestures and movement games to reinforce the learning through rhythmic/spatial awareness. Generally, the pace of transition from one activity to another is faster in the younger class. More time is spent in the younger class on singing and recitation, particularly of birthday verses[63].

Both classes feature a recall of the previous week's work and a transition to new work introduced by the teacher, although greater use is made of games and activities with the younger class, both before and after the main book work, where children in both classes work in silence. For the younger class, there is a story told by the teacher and a concluding candle lighting ceremony associated with the saying of grace for the morning snack. There is no concluding ceremony or ritual with the older class, who spend some of their time walking between classroom and science laboratory.

[62] Examples of the verse are given in Appendix 7.
[63]Birthday verses are written specially for the child by the teacher and recited by all those children whose birthday falls on the particular day of the week

Both lessons have in common elements such as daily mental arithmetic practice, and both draw on the pedagogic principles of recall, exposition of new work and practice by pupils. It can be clearly seen in Table 5.25, however, that the work of the older pupils is more focused on protracted periods of reasoning and thinking, whilst the younger pupils are led to learning through a fairly rapid progression of teacher initiated activities that draw heavily on the willing and feeling activities of singing, recitation and movement. Generally, there is a significant decline in the amount of ritualistic activity as pupils increase in age.

Mins	**Class 4 (9 year olds)**	Mins	**Class 8 (14 year olds)**
00	Teacher plays recorder. Children line up by door and shake hands individually with teacher.	00	Bell rings. Pupils enter class and shake hands individually with teacher, then socialise in small groups.
03	Class sings an action song.	08	Teacher claps hands. Pupils sit down and register taken. Teacher calls first names and pupils answer "yeah" or "yep".
05	Class practice 3x, 6x, 9x tables by co-ordinated rhythmic actions –arm crossing, jumping, clapping. Different groups integrate recitation at different times to stress common multiples.	11	Class recite **morning verse.** Teacher asks class about weekend. Any events we should know about? Pupils questioned about progress on homework projects.
11	All sing a song to tune *Thornbury*.	14	
13	Class recite **morning verse**.		
15	Teacher takes register by singing to children who sing back.	17	Teacher asks class to stand and calls out mental arithmetic questions (simple multiplication of fractions). Pupils sit when they answer one correctly.
17	All sing song *Someone Came a Knocking*.		
18	Two children go to the front of the class and recite their **birthday verses**. Teacher choreographs one of the verses for the child.	20	Teacher addresses class and invites them to recall previous week's work on angles. Pupils take out maths practice books.
24	Children quickly move all the desks to create floor space. Children form a circle, singing.	22	Teacher puts examples on board of calculating missing angle in triangle. Teacher goes through answers on board, but not all pupils are attending.
25	Class recite alliterative tongue twister poems. Rhythmic movements used to emphasise stressed words.	29	Teacher introduces **recall** of previous week's science work, testing for starch.
33	Teacher changes to speaking in German. Class rehearse a short epiphany play in German. Teacher amuses children with exaggerated stage gestures in German.	34	Constructs a table on board. Pupils contribute answers about presence of sugar and starch in various foodstuffs. Teacher adds to table, pupils copy.
47	Children quickly move desks back. Teacher gives out number grids. Mental arithmetic game in which children have to guess a number by asking questions about it.	41	Teacher leads pupils across school to science laboratory. Pupils settle in laboratory and science specialist teacher takes over the lesson.
59	Teacher gives out maths practice books. Children work in silence at sets of calculations, differentiated by group. Teacher introduces **new work** to class.	44	Class teacher remains with class, taking notes. Specialist teacher gives pupils preparation talk on things he found difficult himself in chemistry. Pupils enthralled. Continues to explain to pupils how they will need to build up a big picture through observation of patterns.
72	Exposition of multiplication of three digits by single digit, using pedagogic story of *chest, bags, jewels*.	45	
78	Teacher **recalls** previous work: a class visit to a builder's yard. Introduces numeracy problem: How can the builder calculate the number of bricks he needs? Elicits children's ideas and makes link with new	48	Specialist asks pupils to recall properties of starch and explains a little more about it. Pupils move to demo bench and specialist outlines today's experiment. Shows them

	work on multiplication.		various techniques for controlling boiling
	Transition to **book work**. Children work in silence at various numeracy problems, some of which are related to the new work.	50	tubes, adding indicator solutions etc. Gives health and safety warning about a strong acid that will be used. Class teacher observes and takes notes.
92	Book work ends. Teacher leads counting backwards from 57 in fours. Children rhythmically stamp feet to mark intermediate silent numbers.		Pupils disperse and commence first part of experiment in groups of 3.
112	Teacher and class settle for a story: the *Kalevala Legend* from Finland. Begins by questioning children about what happened yesterday, then continues **telling** (not reading) the story.	58	Specialist asks pupils to watch and listen, explains about how scientists draw diagrams and record their work
		69	Introduces second part of practical, Benedix test for sugar….pupils amused that this test has replaced urine
116	Story ends quickly. All stand and sing *Joy to the World*. Children fold arms across chests and say good morning to teacher, then quietly get their snack boxes.		tasting...recapitulation of instructions
		76	Pupils commence second part of practical
136	Teacher lights a candle. Children sing a grace in German, then eat their morning snack.	82	Specialist stops practical work. Pupils quickly settle. There is a plenary in which specialist questions pupils about their test results and the meaning. Suggests they discuss conclusion with class teacher.
		96	Pupils clear up.
138			Specialist outlines what they will do **tomorrow** (this being a main lesson, the science topic continues daily)
		100	Pupils have returned to class room. Some chatter and horseplay as they wait for teacher.
		103	Class teacher now has attention. Explains to pupils about the nature of science and the need for replication of results which
		106	should be open to challenge. Reminds pupils about the need to write up their work in main lesson books.
		110	Invites pupils to eat their break time snacks, which they do without further ceremony.
		112	
		114	

Table 5.25: A comparison of the pace of main lessons in two classes

Class and subject teachers. In 1992, the so called "three wise men report"[64] was critical of primary school practice that relied excessively on the teaching of several subjects simultaneously through multiple focus group work. In arguing for a more subject focused approach and greater use of whole class teaching, it went on to raise serious questions about the ability of generalist teachers to cover all aspects of the curriculum equally well. This is a long running debate and one of the principal differences between maintained primary schools that use generalist teachers and independent junior schools that are more likely to use subject specialist teachers. Steiner schools are different yet again because of their unique method of the class teacher main lesson before break and subject lessons after break. The case studies offered a rare opportunity to observe in

[64] Alexander et al. (1992).

depth and for protracted periods how different age groups behaved with both class teachers and subject teachers during the same day.

The data do not allow a conclusion to be drawn either in favour of generalist class teachers or subject specialist teachers, particularly when considering the needs of the 9-13 age group which perhaps is the most problematic in this respect. In general, most class teachers were seen to have excellent relationships with their pupils and a remarkable ability to bring classes to order on the strength of these. No instances of teachers' lack of subject knowledge or misconceptions about a subject they were not expert in were noted (although it must be stated that the researchers were not themselves expert in every subject observed). At the same time, class teachers were rarely observed teaching lessons which can be problematic for non-specialists, such as music, Physical Exercise (PE), modern foreign languages or, for older pupils, science (particularly chemistry/physics).

Every school employed subject specialists to teach such lessons, even to the youngest children (see Table 5.5 earlier). The performance of the subject specialists was observed to be more variable than the class teachers. In some cases, it was excellent. The subject specialist brought enthusiasm and knowledge and captivated the children through his or her subject specific pedagogy. In other cases, subject specialists, though expert in their own discipline, lacked the management skills of the class teachers and the quality of the children's attention and behaviour deteriorated significantly in relation to the main lesson. In a number of the schools, class teachers remained with their children during some or all of the subject specialist lessons – a deployment of staffing that is notable given the financial constraints under which the schools operate. Several informants independently suggested that there were, in fact, three kinds of teacher: the class teacher; the class teacher teaching a subject; the subject teacher. All agreed that the first would be the most likely to have a firm control of any class, with the second likely to be better able than the third to manage difficult classes.

The claims for good practice would be:

- All pupils receive input from appropriately qualified specialist teachers, even in the lower primary years.

- There is a broad curriculum with good teaching of subjects such as modern foreign languages, art or music as well as the basic class subjects of literacy and numeracy.

- Pupils feel confident and secure through the influence of a class teacher who has known them well. This leads to good general discipline and a low level of bullying.

- Class teachers do not stagnate with a particular age group but grow in understanding with the pupils through careful attention to subject knowledge and lesson preparation

A Day with Class 4

The day for the 9 and 10 year old pupils began with informal chats to the class teacher. After commencement of morning school proper, the pupils settled quickly and were fully attentive throughout the science main lesson, which concentrated on the natural history of the cuttle fish. Pupils were interested in what the teacher had to say and worked hard to produce pictures and an account of earlier work on the topic in their main lesson books. The researcher remained with the class during morning snacks and was approached by a girl who enquired whether he would be staying for the next lesson. On hearing that he would, she replied "Oh well, I'd better warn you. The next lesson's always a naughty lesson. But it's not me!" This prediction was born out in that the French teacher experienced considerable difficulty in keeping order. Pupils who had previously been extremely compliant with their class teacher called out and back-answered throughout the lesson. On one occasion, the teacher told a boy to leave the room but was ignored. She later insisted that the same pupil should be escorted to the class teacher, but when the pupil refused to move she simply carried on with the lesson. The final lesson before lunch was music, and the pupils were again transformed. The lesson began with a skilful vocal warm-up and intonation exercise which involved the pupils in movement around the room. The teacher then sang confidently to the pupils who seemed suitably inspired by her singing as well as the song itself. This teacher had brought to the lesson some tuned lyres which could be used to accompany the song. All the pupils were eager to play these and all participated in the lesson without disruption. The first lesson of the afternoon was drawing, and this was taught by an experienced teacher who had been at the school a long time. Perhaps surprisingly, the pupils were not automatically well behaved as they had been with their class teacher. The drawing teacher, however, used his management skills to retain an acceptable degree of order during the lesson. The final lesson was eurythmy in the school hall. This lesson was taken by the school's eurythmy teacher. Pupils generally participated well and the few disruptions that occurred were dealt with promptly by the teacher. Discussion of these events at the end of the day revealed that this was a clear example of the class teacher having the strongest relationship with the pupils, whilst subject teachers who were also class teachers were able to manage a class, though not with the same level of reciprocal respect as the class teacher. The subject teacher who was not also a class teacher had the greatest difficulty in delivering an effective lesson. The school admitted that there could sometimes be difficulties in obtaining teachers who had both expert subject knowledge and good class management skills.

5.4.3 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (pedagogy)

Child development

An understanding of child development according to the principles of anthroposophy is at the core and heart of Steiner education, and this fact was universally emphasised as pre-eminent by all the study's respondents. Most maintained sector teachers in the UK would regard the individual child as important, and the recognition of schools having a part to play in the development of the whole child has traditionally identified education in England. Steiner education, however, goes beyond this and sees the role of the teacher as a sacred task in helping each child's soul and spirit incarnate in the world. In practice, this means that Steiner teachers have a heightened commitment to each pupil and it is this commitment that is the basis of making the class teacher-pupil relationship work out over eight years. Two things are particularly important. First, essential to the task of making the class teacher-pupil relationship work out is an understanding that pedagogy and curriculum must be in harmony with the different phases of development children are believed to go through. Second, curriculum activities are undertaken for their value in developing the child's soul qualities, not for their potential future utility. Children study

weaving, for example, not because they might become future weavers, but because the activity of weaving contributes to their development as human beings. Whereas whole class teaching fell out of favour in maintained primary schools during the period immediately before the introduction of the national curriculum in 1988, the teacher has always been a central figure in Steiner pedagogy. To the extent that the teacher is crucial in bringing material directly to the children and interpreting it for them, Steiner pedagogy could be said to be teacher-centred. However, insofar as the work of the teacher must be highly attentive to child development, it could also be said to possess an element of child-centredness.

Centrality of the teacher in the day and teaching

The structure of a two hour main lesson followed by four or five subject lessons for all age groups is a unique feature of Steiner education. This leads to the centrality of the teacher in the day that is different to the experience in maintained schools. Through the combined effects of the main lesson and the continuous eight year relationship, the pupils identify with one particular figure as central to their learning experience. This is the case during the 7 – 14 class teacher years, but also during the 14 – 18 upper school phase when main lessons continue and a subject teacher who acts as class guardian (or sponsor in some schools) continues to exert a normalising or homing influence which ties the pupils' experience together as a coherent package.

Steiner's recognition that pupils aged 11 to 14 develop a desire for independence and control is in concordance with maintained school practice. However, the retention in these years of the same teacher differs from maintained school practice. It is noteworthy in the case studies that classes were significantly more well-ordered and work-focused than in some state schools, very particularly in Classes 6 – 8.

In every Steiner class observed, the teacher was seen to play an effective and central role in developing a good pace for the lessons. Effective pacing is now considered a significant priority in maintained schools. Ofsted and the national strategies have focused considerable attention upon this aspect of teaching. The difference in practice is mainly down to pace in Steiner schools being based on an anthroposophical understanding of rhythm, whereas as in maintained schools, guidance on the appropriate length of different sections of lessons would be more the case. Steiner educators might argue that pace in their lessons is more directly in tune with the natural rhythms and sympathies of the child. A significant feature of main lessons is the change of activity from, for example, silent written work to singing. Through this, it would be argued, pupils' attention spans and capacities for protracted periods of work can be considerably lengthened (as in the case of the two hour main lesson for seven year olds). A number of maintained schools now recognise the importance of breaking up, for example, a literacy lesson with a contrasting activity such as 'brain gym'.

Subject knowledge of teachers

Teachers' subject knowledge is considered to be important. In the upper schools, it is considered a priority to employ a good graduate in the subject to be taught. Not infrequently, this consideration takes precedence in the appointment of staff over finding a teacher with either Steiner teacher training or DfES Qualified Teacher Status. The preference of most schools would be that upper school teachers should have a subject degree backed by Steiner teacher training. In practice, the Steiner schools can experience similar difficulties to maintained schools in recruiting teachers of shortage subjects. Science, especially physics and chemistry, was most frequently mentioned as a particularly difficult area.

In the class teacher years (ages 7 – 14) the ideal seems to be to employ a well qualified, preferably graduate, teacher whose level of education indicates a lively and adaptable mind and the willingness continually to undertake personal study. The personality of the teacher, the ability to enthuse and communicate with children and the willingness to study, understand and apply Steiner's principles are the qualities most sought by schools wishing to employ teachers and teacher training courses assessing potential recruits.

The class teacher would be expected to carefully prepare the subject knowledge required for each lesson, and this is a significantly different process to what might be expected in maintained schools by virtue of the fact that the teacher gradually "grows" with the children over an eight year period. The need for teachers to bring material directly to children through oral presentation without the aid of books demands particularly attentive preparation and study of subject knowledge by class teachers. A number of the teachers we spoke to reported on the desirability of a sabbatical after finishing with a group of pupils in Class 8 and before going back to a new Class 1. Subjects that can be problematic for generalist teachers, such as music or PE are much more frequently taken by specialists than is the case in maintained primary schools.

Other subjects that can cause problems for the non-specialist, the most frequently mentioned of which was chemistry, are often supported by upper school subject specialists. Given that class teachers are working with children up to the age of 14, the demands for study of subject knowledge are very high.

Assessment

It is evident from the case study findings that Steiner teachers spend at least as much time on assessment as mainstream teachers, but take a very different approach. Ongoing observations are described as an integral part of their assessment, as is discussion of pupil progress in teachers' meetings. Benchmarking is less significant in Steiner schools than maintained schools. This is partly because summative tests, such as standard assessment tests (National Curriculum tests) are not used, but also because greater reliance is placed on the class teacher's knowledge of the pupils, developed ideally over an uninterrupted period of eight years. The Steiner teacher thus has an overview of pupils' progression and development that a maintained school teacher would not have. However, the

referencing of this knowledge against comparative knowledge in other schools is not as comprehensively developed in Steiner schools as in maintained schools, and a significantly greater degree of trust in the individual teacher's professional judgement is given.

Amongst the most distinctive aspects of assessment in Steiner schools are child studies and class studies. Moreover, some of the pedagogical and assessment practices may seem unconventional. For example, the meditative picturing of the child or class was drawn to the research team's attention as a component of such studies, as was the potential benefit for a child of the collective concentration of a group of teachers on him or her: the child in some way senses the collective attention and care. In their guidelines for Steiner teachers, Rawson and Richter (2000: 26) highlight this in their outline of child study: "Sometimes it is enough that the staff's heightened awareness of a particular child has a beneficial effect on the child"[65].

All of these practices continue in the upper school (ages 14 – 18+) and would, ideally, constitute the totality of upper school assessment practice. As noted above, the schools accept, to varying degrees, the need to enter pupils for GCSE examinations however. Where this is done, conventional GCSE assessments are given and teachers, in preparing their pupils for these, would make use of similar techniques of assessment to those used in maintained schools.

The place and value of practices such as meditative picturing of the child and the potential efficacy of heightened awareness contrasts markedly with what are considered conventional practices and understandings in most maintained schools. However, it is important to acknowledge that professionals in the maintained sector may be open to or be influenced by the power of spiritual experience. There is evidence that very many school leaders and classroom teachers in maintained schools do report spiritual experiences that involve heightened awareness of a power greater than themselves and have positive implications for their personal and professional lives[66] (Johnson 2000, Woods 2003). The results of research on spiritual awareness (amongst people with and without religious beliefs) can provide a bridge between the specific philosophy of Steiner education and the philosophies and discourse of professional educators in the maintained sector: for example, Hay's discussion of 'relational consciousness' (a heightened sense of connectedness with others, the self, the world and, for some, God) which evidence suggests is widespread amongst the general population (including children) (Hay with Nye 1998, Hay 1987), and Woods' (2003) research on the empowering effects of spiritual experience for headteachers of maintained schools in England.

[65] Rawson and Richter (2000: 26) also emphasise that this is not normally sufficient on its own. Whilst heightened awareness of the staff may itself have a beneficial influence on the child, "usually the study leads to some action and always requires regular follow-up".

[66] In a survey of headteachers of maintained schools in England, just over a half "indicated being inspired and/or supported by transcendent power in their headship" (Woods 2003: 349).

Awareness of developments in the maintained sector

There was little awareness of developments in the maintained sector. The National Primary Strategy, for example, had made very little impact on any of the schools or individual teachers. Few respondents to survey questions identified with any of the recent developments in maintained schools mentioned. Teachers not infrequently expressed a passing interest in knowing more, or the sentiment that more perhaps ought to be known. Generally, however, it would be fair to say that keeping abreast of developments in the maintained sector has not hitherto been a priority in the Steiner schools.

5.5 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision and Inclusion

5.5.1 Survey findings (SEN provision and inclusion)

The schools' survey concentrated on SEN provision. All but one school affirmed that they make special provision for SEN pupils. Three-quarters indicated that they have a written SEN policy. Provision for SEN usually comprises withdrawal of pupil for support (95%) and in-class support (80%)[67]. In addition, provision is made in the form of dedicated teaching assistants (50%) and peripatetic support (30%), with 4 schools (20%) indicating they provide a dedicated unit. Over half (55%) also cited other means of provision, which include individual lessons, movement specialist and extra movement exercises, curative eurythmy, art therapy, music therapy, withdrawal from second foreign language, the anthroposophical school doctor, speech therapy, child study, and trained dyslexia specialists.

Conditions most likely to be recognised are dyslexia, dyspraxia, emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), partial hearing and autism/asperger syndrome (Table 5.26).

Dyslexia	95%
Dyspraxia	95%
Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	86%
Autism/asperger syndrome	86%
Partial hearing	81%
Partial sight	71%
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	76%
Mobility impaired	67%
Gifted & Talented	52%
Other	29%
(Down's syndrome, school refusers, children "not yet incarnated" etc.)	

Table 5.26: Kinds of recognised special educational needs in Steiner schools

Numbers of SEN pupils with statements range from none to three per school. Seven schools indicated they currently have none, nine that they have one, three that they have

[67] The base for these percentages is 20.

two, and one school that it has three. Numbers of SEN pupils without statements range from none to 65 per school.

Identification of SEN occurs through observation by the class teacher and routine screening, which most often is undertaken of Class 2, though many schools also screen pupils in other classes as well. The SEN policy of one school describes the screening of Class 2 as involving "individual screening of each class member resulting in an assessment report by learning support teacher detailing strengths/weaknesses of each child recorded in individual profiles" (School F, Learning Support Policy, September 2004, p3). Special needs assessment procedures include:

- referral to anthroposophical doctor
- specific tests (e.g. spelling, numeracy, reading, movement, cross-dominance, visual discrimination)
- child study
- learning support teacher's observation
- referral to learning support in the school
- referral to outside agency where in-house support is insufficient
- outside assessments funded by parents.

One school explained, for example, that class teachers and the SEN co-ordinator work together to assess needs and develop strategies which are put into operation in the class as well as in private sessions.

5.5.2 Good practice (SEN provision and inclusion)

The case studies of good practice concentrated on broader issues of inclusion, rather than SEN provision.

Differentiation and Grouping Pupils in Steiner schools would not normally be grouped by conventional ability criteria. It would not be considered good practice to place children of the same age in different ability sets for different subjects. In the smaller schools it is sometimes necessary to group different ages together to form a viable class. One such school observed had combined Classes 3, 4 and 5 together. In this case, the teacher used organisational strategies, such as differentiated group work, in order that the Class 5 children could follow the Steiner curriculum appropriate for their age. Steiner, however, recommended that children should be grouped according to temperament, i.e. the four classic temperaments of *choleric*, *phlegmatic*, *melancholic* and *sanguine*. Thus children of the same temperament would be placed next to each other. A justification for this is that the qualities of the temperaments are deeply rooted in the human psyche, and teaching should be differentiated to accommodate this.

Grouping children by temperament is said to allow the teacher to address tendencies to one-sided aspects of personality through differentiated pedagogy that is responsive to choleric-phlegmatic or sanguine-melancholic polarities, and such matters might be discussed at the weekly pedagogical meeting of teachers. Steiner also stressed the social benefits and the effects of temperament grouping on class control. For example,

melancholic children like sitting together because they are unlikely to be annoyed or disturbed by their neighbours. Livelier temperaments such as sanguine or choleric are said to be likely to rub their liveliness off on each other and calm down of their own accord. Little evidence of this aspect of practice was immediately apparent to outside observers, and teachers did not readily volunteer to talk about it. One example is reported below.

The claims for good practice would be:

- Steiner education is in tune with the body of mainstream research that claims that ability grouping is not effective at raising standards of attainment, and can act against the interests of less able children.

- Pedgagogy is differentiated according to pupils' temperaments rather than their summative attainment.

- An effective system of social grouping aids class management and reduces the likelihood of teacher-pupil confrontation.

Temperaments in Class 6

During systematic, targeted observation of children in a Class 6 lesson, it was noted that one boy seemed to have a lively disposition and was seen to be off-task quite often during the observation period. He would frequently grin at the boy next to him, sometimes pointing to things in his work, sometimes turning round and whispering comments that appeared to have little relevance to the lesson. After about fifty minutes of main lesson, he took out a small magnifying glass and used it to concentrate a light spot on his neighbour's hand. This behaviour continued, to the amusement of both boys, for several minutes, whenever the teacher's attention was elsewhere. At other times, he appeared to marshal his thoughts and apply himself to his bookwork with a spurt of energy. The teacher was questioned about this pupil after the lesson and volunteered the information that the pupils were grouped by temperament, assessments having been made in Class 2. Children of the same temperament were grouped together because they "rub the edges off each other". The boy concerned was a sanguine and he would soon get fed up with his own chatter. He was also highly talented and very energetic. The teacher appeared to believe that the natural processes of social adjustment would take their course of events and this avoided direct confrontation with the boy that might damage relationships. No such confrontations were observed, and the boy appeared to complete his work in spite of the off-task behaviour.

Ethnicity and Gender. Steiner education has been criticised for its Germanic centredness, yet Steiner himself stressed the importance of different groups working together in a new spirit of freedom and tolerance, as in the principle - radical at the time - that the children of the workers and managers of the Astoria factory should be educated together. The Steiner curriculum draws on German ideas and is particularly influenced by the art, philosophy and science of Goethe. Steiner stressed, however, that schools in other countries should adapt to the conditions therein. In spite of this, few children of non-white origin were observed during the research, the greatest concentration, not unsurprisingly, being in the inner-city school visited where several children in the class had English as an additional language (EAL). These children appeared to integrate well

during the lesson observed. The relative under-representation of non-white minorities would be a reflection on the location of most of the schools.

The Steiner curriculum has not, since its inception, maintained traditional gender divisions, such as metalwork for boys and needlework for girls. Consequently it has needed less than the maintained curriculum to adapt to changing ideas of gender equality and opportunity. Boys and girls were seen at all ages to participate equally in a wide range of practical activities such as handcrafts, woodwork and metalwork or singing.

Handwork in Class 8

The 14 year old pupils in Class 8 of a large, established school went straight to the handwork room after morning break. Casual conversation amongst some pupils before the lesson commenced included quite a lively exchange on what was and was not racist or sexist. One pupil was heard to say "It's the same. It's all about differences". The lesson began without an introduction. Pupils simply got out the hand and belt looms that contained their ongoing work and commenced weaving. The lesson was relaxed. Pupils of both gender worked comfortably at their tasks, although conversation was allowed. For one group of boys, this changed to a conversation about the behaviour of gangs of youths - "they like destroying really bad cars, like Skodas". One of these boys was making a belt, which he described to the researcher as "alright". Another was making a patterned rug, an activity which he said he "quite liked". The casual conversation continued and a group of girls began discussing the behaviour of boys "Yeah, boys have punch ups. They impersonate girls having a squabble, but I don't think there's ever been a proper bitch fight". The pupils remained similarly on task but talking casually for the whole lesson, the teacher intervening only once to maintain focus and dividing her time between working on a loom herself and helping individual pupils. Towards the end of the lesson the researcher asked some of the pupils whether they enjoyed the activities sufficiently to continue them at home and received replies such as "No, I've got enough stuff to do, quite a lot of homework" (girl) or "No…well…I do repair my trousers. Brian's dad made a little loom with him when he was younger" (boy).

5.5.3 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (SEN provision and inclusion)

The Steiner schools provide conventional forms of SEN provision, but they also make forms of provision that are unique to Steiner education. This is exemplified in the SEN policy document of one school which highlights and describes the unique provision it makes. An extract from the document is shown in Figure 5.1.

(i)	Eurythmy – a therapy which provides healing through movement, working with gestures for the sounds in speech, rhythms and geometric forms. An eurythmy therapist works closely with the school doctor who prescribes the exercises;
(ii)	Curative Education – Individual Learning Support Lessons by a specialist teacher who works with the child after communication with the class teacher (to provide support to children who have a specific learning difficulty or simply require additional support to enable them to acquire literacy skills). Specific exercises are done to develop and strengthen the child's movements in space (three-dimensional space) and time (rhythm), using bean-bag, clapping, walking and stamping exercises. The gross motor movements of various forms and letter are then transferred to work on the blackboard and exercise book. The exercises are conducted with enjoyment and gentleness, using repetition to strengthen the will and memory;
(iii)	Speech Formation – as given by Rudolf Steiner may be used to develop artistic (beautiful) speaking. It may also be applied in a curative way to help to strengthen healthy breathing and to help with dealing with speech impediments.

Figure 5.1: Forms of SEN provision unique to Steiner education provided by School K – extract from SEN Policy (School K, October 2002, p. 2)

On inclusion more generally, it was highlighted in the literature review (Section 4.1.3) that in some ways Steiner education was from its beginnings in advance of maintained education, with regard to gender for example (Rawson 2004). Findings from the case study are consistent with an educational approach which aims to avoid traditional gender divisions in the curriculum. At the same time, the literature review drew attention to some issues concerning equality and inclusion that Steiner education could usefully give explicit attention to.

5.6 Philosophy

5.6.1 Survey findings (philosophy)

The large majority of schools (86%) indicated that their educational provision is based entirely on Steiner's educational philosophy and guiding principles. It is emphasised that the curriculum, pedagogy and leadership and management of Steiner schools is founded in the philosophy and ideas of Steiner. However, two schools replied that other philosophical approaches influence its provision, one indicating that teachers are widely read and the other citing "therapeutic Buddhism" as an influence. Other respondents drew attention to other influences, some viewed negatively, some positively. Most of the schools with upper schools highlighted the fact that national examination syllabuses are based on an educational philosophy and principles different from Steiner, which consequently can generate tensions (see 5.3.1 above). Some drew attention to the fact that individual

teachers are influenced by other beliefs and philosophies, such as Buddhism, through their own interests and reading.

Asked what they would say are the most significant principles from Steiner's lectures and writings that teachers strive to implement in order to give the school its identity, all but one school responded. The answer most commonly given (11 schools) was the understanding of child development which underpins the curriculum and pedagogy. This is consistent with the fact that all schools agree that the grounding of teaching in a view of child development is a distinctive feature of Steiner education, reported above. Two other themes are apparent from the replies. In six schools the principle of a holistic approach to education, or attention specifically to the spiritual aspect of human development, were emphasised. As one school put it, "placing importance on all aspects of child e.g. not just cognitive, but emotionally, physically and spiritually. Integrating thinking, feeling and willing". Also highlighted by six schools was the importance of understanding karma and re-incarnation. For example:

> Karmic understanding of children - is broader context of education. Pre-birth experience affects how each person relates to the curriculum. You are meeting individualities whom you observe and decide how they need to relate to the curriculum.
>
> Each child has been born, each carrying their own identity. We as educators are enabling that individuality to grow and unfold on earth.
>
> Karmic link between members of the school community.

In one of the schools, Steiner's view of re-incarnation was identified as a key principle, and the respondent went on to explain that this helps even if you do not believe in re-incarnation because you see a child as "bringing something and going on somewhere else".

Asked what proportion of staff would call themselves anthroposophists, 11 schools provided an approximate percentage. This ranged from 33% to 100%. Eight schools estimated that a half or more of staff would consider themselves anthroposophists. Six schools which did not give an estimate questioned the idea of a label 'anthroposophist' – for example:

> Very few staff would be happy to label themselves 'ists' but 13 out of 14 have a deep respect for anthroposophy and consider themselves to be working out of anthroposophy.
>
> A high proportion of the staff would align themselves with anthroposophical ideas but would not necessarily call themselves anthroposophists.
>
> That's considered a personal question. We don't like the wording, some would be embarrassed. Don't want to be a cult.
>
> Not many. It's about something living in the person.
>
> I don't think too many would call themselves anthroposophists.

What is certainly evident is that there is widespread agreement that an understanding and appreciation of Steiner's anthroposophical ideas are essential grounding for teaching in Steiner schools. To be more precise, it is widely seen as essential to be striving towards such understanding and appreciation. Asked how important it is that teachers and other staff are knowledgeable about anthroposophy, the large majority of schools (15) affirmed that it was indispensable or of very great importance. For example:

> Very – basis of all we do.
>
> Very important to know what stands behind the reason why certain subjects are taught at the different ages. Why modelling in Class 4. Why eurythmy, why is the lesson presented in an artistic way from Classes 1-8, why child study and meditation on children?
>
> Very – it helps as backgroud knowledge, informing how to apply the curriculum (NOT discussed with the children).
>
> Fundamental that they draw inspiration from and strive to follow principles of anthroposophy.
>
> Extremely, for everyone on a full time basis. Don't have to be experts, but must be open. (Some don't know it but do it intuitively).

It is seen as important that class teachers have some knowledge of anthroposophy or a commitment to developing this. In only 10% of schools was it indicated that they would be happy for a class teacher to work in their school with little or no knowledge of anthroposophy. There is a willingness to be more flexible with regard to subject teachers, especially part-time subject teachers: the proportion happy to have a part-time subject teacher with little or no knowledge of anthroposophy being 86%. This willingness to be flexible in this regard is in large measure a recognition of the difficulty of recruiting teachers to work in Steiner schools.

Teachers working together to explore and deepen their understanding of Steiner's philosophy and educational principles is another important feature of Steiner education. In all of the schools, it was said that there is collegial study of Steiner educational ideas. Most (95%) indicated that they feel free to raise issues in these collegial study sessions[68]. All but two schools indicated that the large majority of staff attends collegial study, with 13 schools suggesting between 90% and 100% of staff participating.

Collegial study is part of the 'inner work' of Steiner teachers which is integral to their professional development. As the staff handbook of one of the Steiner schools explains:

> It is assumed that teachers in a Steiner Waldorf School are continually striving to deepen their understanding and insight into child development through study, meditation, artistic activity and conferences.
> (School C, Staff Handbook 2003/04, p21)

[68] It should be borne in mind that this question was not put to all Steiner teachers but was the response of the teacher or teachers involved in completing the survey schedule to schools.

Collegial study has a wider context in the college of teachers which will be highlighted below (Section 5.7.1).

In most schools (86%), key texts, documents or articles that teachers draw on in guiding and developing practice in their school could be identified. A mixture of works by Steiner and curriculum and teaching texts was mentioned. Several of the schools referred generally to Steiner's lectures and other works without necessarily giving titles of specific ones. Amongst those who did, the work by Rudolf Steiner himself mentioned most frequently was:

- The Study of Man (also called in a recent edition The Foundation of Human Experience) (7 schools).

A variety of other texts was mentioned. Some schools referred generally to ranges of publications such as that produced by the SWSF. Three texts most often mentioned by name were:

- The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum, edited by Martyn Rawson and Tobias Richter (8 schools)
- Rudolf Steiner's Curriculum for Waldorf Schools, by E. A. Karl Stockmeyer (4 schools)
- A Handbook for Waldorf Class Teachers, by Kevin Avison (4 schools)

Replies varied to a question about which texts to recommend to a new teacher. Again a variety of works by Steiner and curriculum and teaching texts was mentioned. Some did not volunteer particular texts. For example, one school explained that it does not have a policy on this. Another emphasised that it depends on the needs of the teacher. The specific texts most often mentioned were:

- The Study of Man, by Steiner (5 schools)
- Practical Advice to Teachers, by Steiner (4 schools)
- The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum, edited by Martyn Rawson and Tobias Richter (5 schools)
- Rudolf Steiner's Curriculum for Waldorf Schools, by E. A. Karl Stockmeyer (4 schools)

5.6.2 Good practice (philosophy)

Freedom and free thinking as ultimate goal. According to Rudolf Steiner, the highest endeavour of educators must be to develop free human beings who are able to impart purpose and direction to their lives. Through this arises the principle that *freedom is not a method of education, but an ultimate goal.* Thus education towards freedom would be considered the fundamental of good practice in Steiner schools. But there is a paradox at the heart of this that is not readily appreciated by those unused to Steiner's methods. Young people attain freedom through first being under the authority of adults. This is a child developmental model in which actions beneficial to the child's future are undertaken on behalf of the child, rather than an apprenticeship model through which children exercise freedom as though they were small citizens. In the early years, this authority takes the form of learning through imitation. In the class teacher years, it takes the form of the teacher representing the world as an absolute authority to the child. For

the upper school years, Steiner stressed the way in which teachers must adapt to lively adolescent questioning of authority (viewed as normal and healthy) through changing from being *an authority* to an authority *on their subject*.

Good practice in Steiner schools therefore occurs when the teacher is successful at being authoritative. In general, a good lesson during the class teacher years (ages 7 – 14) would see children strongly task focused under the direct authority of the teacher. This would be associated with a minimum of disruption and off-task behaviour by children. Children would be free to ask questions about the work and teachers observed generally welcomed the opportunity to respond patiently and sympathetically to children's questions. Generally, however, the teachers decided on what to bring to the class and in all the class teacher lessons observed, the children followed without question the teacher's directions. A good lesson during the upper school years might well see the teacher challenged by the pupils, and it was repeatedly stressed by informants in the study that teachers would rapidly lose authority and credibility if they did not have the subject knowledge with which to respond to pupils' challenges. This kind of challenge could also be made of teachers in the older class teacher years. Beginning perhaps in Class 5 but developing quite rapidly in Class 6, teachers needed the authority of subject knowledge as well as the authority of their own personality.

The claims for good practice would be:

- Good discipline through the clear authority of the teacher.
- Progression and continuity in the gradual development of pupils' ability to make judgements.
- The ultimate achievement of free thinking individuals able to reason, put forward good arguments and take full responsibility in a free, democratic society.

Puberty in Three Schools

The years of late puberty are one of the most difficult times faced by adults in maintaining authority over young people. Observations were conducted in Class 8 (age 14 years) in three different schools. In two of these, the teacher was seen to have a warm relationship with the pupils who listened attentively to the input, asked relevant questions and responded rapidly and politely to requests and instructions. The force of the teacher's personality, the depth of the eight year relationship with the class and the interest of the lesson content seemed to account for this rather than the use of any particular rules, sanctions or incentives. In the third, the teacher was finding it harder to control the pupils and was subject to the kind of back-chat and inattention to requests not uncommon with the age group. In this case, pupils took longer to comply with instructions and showed less interest in lesson content. The use of sanctions or incentives appeared to make little difference, confirming the significance of the teacher's personality. Key informants interviewed about these observations were of the view that the maintenance of class teacher authority throughout the years of puberty was indeed dependent upon personality and the ability to adapt to a different relationship with the children. A number of informants stressed that Class 6 was the make or break year for this process. If a teacher is unable to adjust to a class's rapidly growing desire to control and influence their world during this time, they may find it difficult to maintain their authority during the challenges of puberty, ultimately making it harder for the pupils to come to terms with their newly emerging powers of reason and judgement.

5.6.3 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (philosophy)

Steiner education is grounded in the principles of anthroposophy and Steiner's educational philosophy. From these roots come the importance attached to a particular understanding of child development, concepts integral to Steiner schools' pedagogy, such as willing/feeling/thinking, the central role given to the artistry and authority of the teacher and the emphasis on valuing childhood, as well as the collegial running of Steiner schools and the collective study of the anthroposophical underpinnings of Steiner education.

The Steiner school curriculum is not designed to guide and encourage young people into becoming adherents of anthroposophy. Indeed, the educational aim of developing pupils to be capable of free thinking and making decisions for themselves is of central importance to Steiner education, as is the distinctive purpose of religious education to awaken pupils to the spiritual and ethical dimensions of human life. The indications from the data gathered by the research team tend to confirm that these are the educational aims that Steiner schools seek to achieve. The goal of enabling pupils to grow into adults capable of making independent judgements is one that is shared by the maintained sector.

The research data also tend to confirm that Steiner schools are not faith schools in the sense of seeking to nurture pupils into becoming adherents of anthroposophy[69] anthroposophists. Steiner schools are not, therefore, comparable with faith schools in the maintained sector. However, nor are they exactly the same as maintained non-faith (i.e. non-church) schools[70]. The research findings from this study confirm that Steiner schools tend to have a character that draws from a particular relationship with and understanding of the religious tradition of humankind. There are three aspects to this. Firstly, anthroposophy is based not only on empirical study and observation but also Rudolf Steiner's "direct insight into… spiritual realities" (Rawson and Richter 2000: 14) and involves concepts, such as karma, the Divine, re-incarnation and the soul which are associated with religious traditions (see Steiner 2005). Secondly, though the degree of emphasis varied, schools in the study describe themselves as Christian-based or following a Christian ethic – for example:

> Steiner schools are Christian in essence and celebrate the main Christian festivals.
> (School M, Curriculum, downloaded from website, 5th Oct 2004, p. 3)
>
> [School Y] is a non-denominational school run on Christian ethics.
> (School Y, Prospectus, 2004, p. 1)
>
> The school is non-denominational. It presents a Christian perspective from a non-sectarian point of view.
> (School R, Prospectus, undated, p. 10)

[69] Some respondents were not comfortable with classifying anyone as an anthroposophist (Section 5.6.1).
[70] It should be acknowledged that non-faith schools in the maintained sector are not uniform and that they in varying ways promote spiritual development, encourage awareness of ethical issues from the perspective of Christianity, other faiths and secular viewpoints and highlight religious festivals and cultures.

Thirdly, religious education lessons in Steiner schools have a greater significance and connection with the broad curriculum than RE lessons in most maintained non-faith schools. As has been observed above, lessons in religious education are not about inculcating a belief in Christianity or any other faith, but they are underpinned by, as one school described it, the "Christian impulse at the heart of Rudolf Steiner's insights" (School R, Handbook for Parents, November 2004, p.42). That school's description of religious education lessons from Class 1 to Class 11[71] provides an insight into the Christian and other influences and the experientially based approach which flow through religious education, and how it is intended to develop towards the encouragement of independent thinking that grows out of spiritually enriched learning.

5.7 Leadership and Management

5.7.1 Survey findings (leadership and management)

Board of Trustees/Council of Management

Each Steiner school has its own Board of Trustees/Council of Management or equivalent[72]. Membership is usually drawn from parents/carers (95%) and 'friends of the school' (90%). In a little over half of schools (52%), teachers are members, and in 40% of schools members were drawn from other groups too. The responsibilities of the Board/Council were seen in almost all cases (95%) as exercising overall responsibility for the school and provision of means of support for educational provision (finance, legal and contractual matters, etc.) . In a substantial number of schools, the Board/Council's responsibilities were seen as extending to fund-raising (62%) and teacher recruitment (38%). Small minorities expressed the view that their Board/Council had responsibility for overseeing the school's day-to-day running (19%), admissions (14%), overseeing events organised by the school (14%), management and organisation of the curriculum (10%), and other matters (19%) such as acting as an appeal body for disciplinary procedures.

In three-quarters of schools, Board/Council members were said to have particular responsibilities. The main responsibilities specified included health and safety, finance, and land and building.

College of teachers

All but two schools have a college of teachers. The two without a college are run by the trustees and a steering group made up of teachers and parents.

[71] This is reproduced in Appendix 8.

[72] One school indicated that it has a Board of Directors because it is a Limited Company. Another explained that it does not have a Board of Trustees/Council of Management as such, but indicated who is involved in the management and governance of the school. These two schools are subsumed within the reporting of findings on Board/Councils.

The college of teachers is usually made up of teachers, and in some cases other staff such as administrators, who wish to express their commitment to the school by taking on the responsibilities entailed in running the school. One school states that college membership "is open to teachers and managers/administrators" who

> 1. have been confirmed in their work and have been put forward by their hosts[73]
> 2. are prepared to carry and represent the school on all levels and are willing to serve on [management groups, PTFA] etc.
> 3. commit to actively attend all relevant meetings and will maintain confidentiality when required
> 4. are willing to work with the spiritual/pedagogical philosophy of the school.
>
> (School C, Staff Handbook 2003/04, p. 8)

Colleges have responsibility for the wide range of matters which pertain to the running and educational activities of the school. As one school describes it, the college of teachers carries out the "functions of a head teacher"(School U, Parents Handbook, undated, p. 3). They deal with staffing, personnel issues, administration, finance, disciplinary matters, admissions and long term priorities, as well as professional development, curriculum and pedagogical matters and child studies. The extent of their responsibility is illustrated by the school which describes its college as being "also responsible for preserving and deepening the spiritual identity and impulse of the school" (ibid). It was evident from the descriptions of how colleges operate, given by teachers during fieldwork visits, that they are not seen purely as business meetings in the conventional sense. College meetings are a space in the week for collegial study and other collective activity. This school, for example, explains:

> The College meetings, which take place every Thursday evening, begin with eurythmy which is followed by a meditative verse. The College works out of an imaginative picture of how it can work in harmony with the spiritual impulses that support and inspire the education. This is followed by a short period of study which then leads into the agenda for the week.
>
> (School M, school website page on Organisation, downloaded 5th October 2004)

The perceived benefits of the collegial system of running Steiner schools were:

- creates "ownership" – all are encouraged to take responsibility for the school
- draws on diversity of strengths, expertise, etc.
- has educational benefits – e.g. teachers share educational difficulties and decisions about pedagogy "are made by those who have the children"
- reduces division between education and management/administration
- maintains the human focus in the organisation of the school
- develops the participants as people and teachers – e.g. helping the teacher to grow, "bringing out the best in each to enlighten different concerns or issues".

The collegial running of schools is an integral aspect of Steiner pedagogy. That is, it is understood as impacting upon the teaching and educational experience of children by facilitating at least three kinds of activity (gleaned from the findings on pedagogy

[73] Each new teacher is assigned a host who provides support and mentoring and passes information to the teacher from College meetings.

discussed in Section 5.4 and the aims and perceived benefits of the collegial system outlined above):

- collective concentration on matters that directly pertain to individual children (in child studies for example)
- shared development and sustaining of teachers' affective and aesthetic sensitivities (through collective artistic activity for example) which is important to maintaining the inner balance and inner work of teachers so that their teaching attends to and reflects a holistic concern with the human being
- consideration of strategic and other decisions (on finance, staffing, curriculum etc.) which is informed by shared knowledge of the children.

Another way the collegial running of the school was said to be important was through its effect on the teacher as a teacher. One school highlighted as a benefit the "growing of the teacher". On a fieldwork visit, a teacher explained that the collegiate system, although slow and frustrating sometimes, encourages personal development and confidence which impacts positively on the class teacher in his or her teacher role. Although the study was not set up to establish how many teachers concur with this view, it is a significant potential benefit of the Steiner collegial system.

The data from the study do not enable us to claim that the idealised aims of the collegial system are translated into practice in all of the participating schools. The research did, however, produce data that provide insights into its perceived problems. Most schools consider that under the collegial system responsibilities are fairly distributed (62%), though just over a quarter of schools (29%) considered that they were not. Most (67%) affirmed that there are challenges running the schools as colleges of teachers. The principal problems identified fell into four categories:

- slowness and inefficiency: deliberations can be time-consuming and seen as inefficient, with no clear responsibility for making a decision
- unequal distribution of responsibilities, resulting in their concentration amongst a relatively small number of individuals
- internal power differences: dominance by certain individuals/groups, personality clashes and "power plays"
- individual limitations: not everyone has the aptitudes and skills to participate.

During fieldwork visits, examples of difficulties and challenges in running the collegial system were also drawn to the researchers' attention. In one instance, for example, the failure of the system to facilitate decision-making and the unwillingness of numbers of teachers to take on their share of collective responsibility was emphasised by a key member of the administrative staff.

Asked on the survey schedule about how problems were being overcome, replies could be grouped into three themes:

- alertness to and awareness of the needs of the school
- mandate system (explained below)
- additional training.

The large majority of schools (16) indicated that college meetings are well or very well attended. All colleges operate with a system where designated teachers have special responsibilities. Schools were asked to describe how leadership and management responsibilities are shared and allocated within the school. The main ways, according to the responses, were as follows:

- the mandate system, through which individuals or groups are authorised and given responsibility for defined areas or initiatives; some referred to use of sub-groups. Two schools highlighted co-ordination of the mandate groups by managers.
- responsibilities allocated to individuals, e.g. teacher manager as the chief link with responsibility for the daily running of the school; finance officer. One school referred to annual allocation of tasks.
- support role of administrators, e.g. providing co-ordination across groups; a full-time administrator who receives the enquiries which in a maintained school would go to the "head teacher" and takes their direction from the college.
- a management group which carries out various tasks i.e. new buildings, premises, publicity, etc.

Creation of an education manager post is one of the ways by which some schools have sought to improve the running of schools. The education manager, as described by one of the schools, is "responsible for co-ordinating the administrative work associated with the education provision of the school" in addition to tasks such as timetabling, providing information to government about educational provision and overseeing the admissions process (School C, Staff Handbook 2003/04, p10). Final responsibility for all educational matters remains with the college of teachers. Four schools have an education manager (19%), and another three are thinking of creating such a post. Over half (57%) indicated that they do not have, and did not indicate that they were considering, an education manager post.

The working relationship between trustees and the college is facilitated in a number of ways[74]:

- working groups which include trustees and teachers/administrative staff (89%)
- trustees regularly meet representatives of teaching and administrative staff (84%)
- Board/Council and college of teachers meet together at designated times (74%)
- teacher manager/college of teachers chair person acts as link with Board/Council (53%)
- other, such as development groups, extraordinary meetings, occasional joint meals with reading of festival texts (32%).

Teachers' meetings

As well as meetings of the college of teachers, all of the schools have other teachers' meetings, including subject/age specific teachers' meetings (71%). These meetings were reported as being generally well or very well attended. Only in two schools were they said to be not so well attended. The topics, issues and activities which teachers' meetings

[74] The base for these percentages is 19.

chiefly concentrate on are of two kinds. Firstly, there are those concerned with educational and pedagogical matters, which 17 schools explicitly drew attention to. These include discussion and review of pedagogical issues, attention to issues regarding children and classes (such as playground incidents), child and class studies, and study of anthroposophy and educational theory and practice. Secondly, business, administrative and planning matters form an important part of the meeting, explicitly referred to by 18 schools. These include the day-to-day running of the school, forthcoming events (such as festivals), and policies and procedures.

Finance

The main source of funding is overwhelmingly fees, for 17 schools (81%), which account for between 66% and 100% of these schools' income. For one school, the main source of funding is the Camphill Community of which it is part; for another school, the main source is family contributions[75]. The latter school operates a "contribution system" in which parents bequeath "gifts to the learning community" rather than having "bought a service". The size of the gift is negotiated between school and parent according to means. From the total income, teachers draw salaries according to needs and the school makes the commitment to educate all children equally whatever circumstances befall them during their time at the school.

Most schools drew on a combination of different income sources:

- fund-raising (95%)
- fees (86%)
- gift aid (81%)
- hiring out of building/facilities (62%)
- other, such as grants, donations, bequests from wills and family contributions (52%)

Most schools (71%) offer concessionary or free places. Three indicated that they do not. Twelve schools specified the number of concessionary or free places they offered in the academic year 2004/05. The number of concessionary places in these 12 schools ranged from three to 150. Six schools offered free places – between one and 25 in the academic year 2004/05.

Schools have institutional arrangements to prepare, discuss and agree annual budgets. Most often this involves a group or committee which is given responsibility for finance, but in some instances the responsibility is given to particular staff, such as a financial administrator or manager. Final approval or control for budgets is most frequently described as resting with the Board of Trustees/Council of Management. Two schools explained that the final decision lies with the finance or management group. As one described it, the finance group presents budgets to the college of teachers and trustees and has the final decision-making authority after listening to the comments made, whilst recognising that the trustees have ultimate responsibility.

[75] Two schools did not respond to the question.

An insight into the areas of schooling which are perceived as being in most need of additional funding was given by asking which areas in the school would benefit from greater funding. Salaries and staffing appeared as the most frequently mentioned area. Eleven schools specifically highlighted this. A further four schools answered that all areas would benefit, without further elaboration.

Accommodation was also a prominent concern. Nine schools specifically mentioned premises, maintenance and classrooms as areas most in need of additional funding. This reinforces what became apparent from survey and case study visits. A notable feature of many schools is the problem of obtaining and maintaining premises, with some adapting and extending large houses and others resorting to ingenious adaptations of premises ranging from barns to disused churches.

Other areas which were seen as potentially benefiting from additional funding were furniture, sports and science equipment, library facilities, professional development and curriculum development.

There is little doubt that the English Steiner schools (unlike, for example, the New Zealand schools which receive state funding) have to maintain a difficult balancing act between the desire to be open to all families and the need to raise sufficient income to reward teachers adequately and develop buildings and facilities. This will be further elaborated in section 5.10. State funding would help significantly with this, but many of the teachers spoken to during the case studies were quite wary of losing their independence and freedom to teach according to Steiner's advice.

Generally, teachers in the larger and longer established schools were more likely to express the opinion that the school should continue as it always had done than teachers in the newer, smaller schools whose priorities were clearly very directly concerned with daily financial survival. Only one of the more established schools visited had worked out a fully comprehensive alternative to fee charging, but this school commented on the continuing difficulties of explaining its operation to parents. Overall, much is expected of both parents and teachers over and above the normal level of contribution in state schools. Whilst this can be a source of strength and solidarity that gives a clear and worthwhile sense of purpose, it was clearly also a source of tension in some cases. Parents who had the means to pay fees sometimes could not see the problem and some schools reported resentment amongst parents at being asked to contribute both fees and time to raise further funds or assist in practical ways. The option of charging fees presents the schools with considerable dilemmas in balancing the relative values of freedom and independence, fully adequate funding (particularly of teachers' salaries) and universal access to Steiner education regardless of means[76].

[76] This is despite the fact that Steiner schools try to keep fees as low as possible.

Research and Collaboration

A third of schools indicated that the school or its teachers had undertaken or been involved with empirical research into Steiner education. In many cases this involved teachers undertaking doctoral or masters level research, and in at least one case the school had a formal connection with degree programmes at a local university.

All 21 schools indicated that they collaborate with other Steiner schools. This includes sports events, cultural exchanges and shared productions of plays, schools mentoring, sponsoring or advising other schools, teacher training, visiting classes in other schools, teaching in other schools, national and international conferences, meetings of the SWSF, and exchange visits of pupils with overseas schools.

Just four replied that they collaborated with other independent schools. The only example given was an exchange visit of teachers to a Montessori kindergarten.

Five schools have, or have had (in the past five years), organised programmes of exchange with state schools[77]. A larger number (10 schools) indicated that there are, or have been, ad hoc initiatives involving exchanges and co-operation with state schools. One school mentioned tension with a local school, whilst another indicated that opportunities are few and far between because they do not get information and are omitted from the LEA mailing list. Examples of exchange and collaboration with state schools include:

- provision of gym club for pupils from two local maintained schools (organised programme, current)
- participation in schools' basketball league (organised programme, current)
- children from local primary school have attended the Advent spiral each year for three years; building and playground are shared with the school too (ad hoc, current)
- a workshop with the Young Shakespeare Company in conjunction with a local primary school (ad hoc, current)
- performance of class play at a state school (ad hoc, current)
- local maintained sector teachers coming to visit and be shown round the Steiner schools (ad hoc, current)
- local primary schools invited to plays (ad hoc, past)
- teachers visiting local maintained schools (ad hoc, past)
- project with a secondary school involving access to its ICT suites; in return the secondary school had access to the Steiner school's craft resources (ad hoc, past).

5.7.2 Good practice (leadership and management)

Collegiality. The case studies do not add significantly to the survey data on the subject of leadership and management, other than to confirm that the distributed model of leadership (see Section 5.7.3) through the teachers' college indicated in the survey does

[77] Nine schools said they did not and seven did not reply.

in fact operate in practice. A number of respondents emphasised that decision making is not by democratic majority but by consensus. This can lead, in practice, to quite lengthy debates and delays to decision making. This was one of the problems that emerged from the schools' survey. One of the newest schools was making effective use of a scheme (using guidelines, produced by a consultant, designed to aid the efficient and effective working of a collegial leadership system) and was observed to respond promptly and efficiently to administrative enquiries.

Collegiality extends beyond administration and management into pedagogy. All the schools visited held both college meetings and weekly pedagogical meetings of teachers. During these meetings, open discussion of problems and successes with particular classes, lessons and individual pupils is encouraged. Steiner's lectures are referred to and teachers constantly update themselves on the pedagogical principles outlined by Steiner, testing these in the practice of collegial discussion.

The claims to good practice would be:

- All members of the school community are equally valued, staff are supportive of each other and morale is high in consequence.
- Decision making, though sometimes slow, is robust and commands the commitment of all.
- A common expertise and shared understandings develop amongst the school staff.

The Festival: a topic for the teachers' meeting

At one of the large schools, the whole school filled the spacious and well equipped theatre for a periodic festival. Classes 4 and above contributed a range of items, including several eurythmy performances, some recitations, a short play and some choral performances, including a moving rendition by Class 11 of a piece that had been sung at the memorial service for an elderly teacher and supporter of the school who had recently died. The festival was discussed during the teachers' meeting that took place the same evening. Colleagues were invited to comment and there was a general atmosphere of collegial affirmation, although a number of critical points were raised also. The discussion broadened to other recent events in the school. Class 6's pirate breakfast for the tsunami appeal had raised over £500 and colleagues were thanked for the time they had given on Saturday morning to support this. Class 7's recent play had been well received, but the teacher reported that the pupils had been disappointed by the lack of appreciative letters received from other classes. This was duly noted by the other teachers.

5.7.3 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (leadership and management)

Leadership and management in Steiner and maintained schools are markedly different. Three aspects of this difference are highlighted here. Firstly, the research findings confirm that Steiner schools do not have a formal hierarchy amongst teachers, whereas in

the maintained sector schools are run according to a traditional hierarchy with a single headteacher. In the vast majority of the Steiner schools responsibility rests with the college of teachers. The college not only exercises responsibility for the school's educational activities and management but is also intended to embody and develop the spiritual life of the school. The latter duty to the spiritual aspect of the school is a second way in which the leadership and management of Steiner schools is distinctive. The third aspect is the way in which collegial running of the school was said to be important through its effect on the teachers themselves, in that it encourages personal growth and development which impacts positively on the class teacher in his or her teacher role. This research study was not designed to validate this, nor the extent to which the colleges embodied and developed the life of the school, though the findings reinforce the importance attached by teachers to the educational significance of the collegial running of schools.

Having emphasised the contrast between the non-hierarchical arrangements of Steiner schools and the traditional hierarchy of maintained schools, there is a need to highlight the fact that there are points of overlap. The collegial approach of Steiner education is in tune with certain key ideas which are aimed at improving leadership in the public sector, including the maintained education sector, and are a feature of the Government's modernisation agenda. There is much interest in the maintained sector in developing distributed forms of leadership with dispersed discretion and responsibility amongst staff and in creating less bureaucratic and more flexible forms of leadership and management (Woods and Woods 2004, 2005, Woods et al. 2004). In addition, the importance, as perceived in schools, of the collegial approach for pedagogy and the development of the teacher connect with mainstream notions of community of practice, which is characterised by "dense relations of mutual engagement organised around what [teachers] are there to do" (Wenger 1998: 74; see also Stehlik 2002b).

The research findings suggest that the reality of the collegial approach falls short of the ideals. Perceived problems in schools include slowness and inefficiency as well as informal power differences amongst teachers. Recognising these difficulties, changes have been introduced by some schools with the intention of improving efficiency and effectiveness, whilst sustaining the essential collegial character. The extent to which organisational arrangements, such as the mandate system, achieve their intentions would be of interest to those in the maintained sector interested in developing distributed leadership. So too would further research into distinctive features of Steiner schools' collegial system: for example, the integration of collective study and other activities (such as artistic activity) into meetings so that the college becomes (ideally) a shared space for each teacher's reflective activity and the claimed impact on pedagogy and teachers' professional development.

5.8 Parental involvement

5.8.1 Survey findings (parental involvement)

Parents support Steiner schools in a variety of ways. Table 5.27 lists the most common forms of parental involvement.

parents' evenings	95%
fund-raising activities	95%
school trips	95%
as representatives on the Board of Trustees	86%
maintenance of buildings, site and grounds / internal decoration	86%
transport	86%
giving administrative help	81%
class meetings	76%
plays	76%
camps	76%
PTA	71%
classroom assistance, such as reading	71%
music	71%
other	33%

Table 5.27: Parents'/carers' involvement

One school, for example, highlights the benefits that flow from "the energetic community of parents and teachers working together for the benefit of the children" and states that parents are asked to support the school in three ways:

> financially, by paying fees
> practically, by joining in some of a range of activities such as building work, cleaning and fundraising
> spiritually, by holding the good of the school in their hearts
> (School 12, school website page on parental involvement, downloaded 6th October 2004)

The great majority of schools (91%) have procedures for dealing with concerns raised by a parent/carer. Of the 20 schools which responded about the first point of contact for parents/carers, all indicated that it is the class teacher (or class guardian in upper schools). Six of these indicated it is the class teacher and administrator.

Of the 20 schools which responded to a question about whether the school participates in the SWSF Code of Practice process, all but one indicated that they do.

It is clear that there is a gap between parental understanding of Steiner education and the informed understanding of teachers with anthroposophical backgrounds. All the schools visited during the research reported in this report were aware of this and, to varying degrees, promoted parent education events which aimed to explain the principles and ideals of what they were doing. Parental understanding can thus tend to develop not untypically after the child has started at the school. In most cases, this seemed to be a positive process.

5.8.2 Good practice (parental involvement)

Home-school links. Some parents choose Steiner education because they were themselves Steiner educated or because they have come to an understanding of anthroposophical principles. These, however, were reported by the schools to be a minority. Others choose Steiner schools because they sense that the ethos is in keeping with values such as organic farming or environmental concern. Still others choose Steiner schools because they are uneasy with what they perceive to be the levels of stress placed on pupils by the frequent testing that takes place in maintained schools. For parents such as these, the schools need to explain their philosophy and principles and most schools mounted regular meetings, lectures and events for parents with this in mind. For the school that used a contribution system rather than fees, this was a particular issue. Talks were said to be a constant necessity: "Parents need to be reminded of how different it is here. They need to learn to place a different value on working with community".

Teachers are also expected to visit their pupils at home in order to further their understanding of them as individuals. At one school visited, it was noted that the Class 4 pupils were eagerly looking forward to such visits. The teacher explained that "it helps enormously. It develops a friendship with them. I'd do trampolining with them or whatever they've got at their home". This same school produced a particularly informative magazine for parents[78].

The claims for good practice would be:

- Teachers know their pupils very well and are attentive to their home circumstances.

- Schools make strenuous attempts to inform parents about the differing basis of their philosophy and teaching methods.

Homework at School

The day with Class 4/5 came to an ordered conclusion. Pupils recited the closing verse, then quietly and obediently tidied their chairs. Each left the class one at a time, shaking hands formally with the teacher and exchanging a few personal words about how the day had gone. One pupil remained behind in the class whilst the two teachers made themselves a cup of tea in the nearby staffroom. Changing to a more informal mode, the Class 4/5 teacher offered the pupil a cup of tea and helped her organise her materials and settle at a desk to complete her homework. The teacher explained to the researcher that this was because the girl was going through a difficult time at home, described as a "mother-daughter stress, not specifically a problem with homework". Knowledge of the pupil's current home circumstances and liaison with the parents had led to this spontaneous arrangement, which was not untypical of the way the school worked.

[78] The sample issue contained articles on the following subjects: Rhythm, Repetition and Discipline in the Early Years; Rhythm in the Lower School; Rhythm and Languages; Handwork, The Process of Knitting and Rhythm; The Class 3 Curriculum and How it Supports the 9 Year Old Child; Exploring Natural Mystery: Environmental Studies with Class 3; What is Eurythmy and What Does it Do for Your Children?

5.8.3 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (parental involvement)

Parents/carers support Steiner schools in many ways which are common to them and the maintained sector (through fund-raising and Parent-Teacher Associations, for example). The commitment of parents/carers of Steiner school pupils is greater, however, in some respects. Their support is seen as important in ensuring that the experience and environment of the child are appropriate, in terms of Steiner's understanding of child development. The admissions criteria applied in a number of Steiner schools, discussed in Section 5.1.2, make clear that family support for, or 'connection to' Steiner philosophy, education and school ethos are seen as significant factors in enabling the child to benefit from Steiner education.

Another aspect to parental involvement is the importance of this in helping to maintain schools which are financially constrained. It has been noted above that for many schools obtaining and maintaining suitable premises is a continuing difficulty[79]. A common factor amongst the schools is the level of commitment shown by parents (and teachers) to the acquisition and improvement of teaching accommodation. In some schools, parents are invited to make contributions in kind through offering building skills or participating in work days. Other schools felt, however, that this could lead to difficulties in accounting and insisted on conventional invoicing procedures. In the smaller schools, it was common to find practices such as parents joining volunteer rotas for duties such as school cleaning.

5.9 Teachers

5.9.1 Survey findings (teachers)

Table 5.28 provides information on numbers, full or part time status and qualifications of teachers, based on data from 17 schools. Almost two-thirds of teachers at these schools work full-time. Most teacher training has been undertaken in Steiner institutions such as the London Teacher Training Seminar or Emerson College, or in some of the larger schools which run small teacher training courses. A little over half hold a Steiner qualification in education. Only relatively small proportions of the staff in each of the 17 schools for which data on qualifications were supplied are also in possession of an award bearing Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) of the DfES, such as a Bachelor in Education (Bed) or a Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE). Overall, 28% hold QTS and the range at individual schools is from 0% (at five, mainly smaller schools) to 47%.

[79] See Section 5.7.1.

Total teachers	317
Full time	201
Part time	116
% holding QTS (DfES Qualified Teacher Status)	28%
% holding Steiner qualification	57%
% holding other (degree or diploma level)	19%

Notes:

1. Data supplied by 17 schools.
2. Includes class and subject teachers in all phases, but excludes assistants and peripatetics.
3. "Other" category includes holders of degree or diploma but no teaching qualification, either QTS or Steiner qualifications.
4. Some teachers with Steiner qualifications also hold QTS and have been counted twice (hence total of 104%).
5. Teachers holding only a eurythmy diploma have not been counted as "other" since this subject is not taught in state schools.

Table 5.28: Numbers, full or part time status and qualifications of Steiner teachers, 2004

Each school was asked whether the following aspects of teachers' conditions applied to its teachers (numbers of schools affirming these is in brackets):

- There is a contracted number of hours to be worked by full-time teachers - usually weekly, sometimes annually. (11)[80]
- The number of days in school is specified for full-time teachers. (15)[81]
- Teachers are obliged to attend school on days when no pupils are present. (17)[82]
- INSET days are provided by the school. (17)[83]
- Teachers have the opportunity to attend short in-service courses run by[84]:
    - the Steiner movement (17)
    - other providers (16).
- Teachers have the opportunity to undertake further accredited study for their professional development. (13)[85]
  (All but one of these 13 schools indicated that there is financial support for this.)
- Teachers are encouraged to attend national and/or international conferences. (17)[86]
- Membership of professional associations is encouraged/ supported. (2)[87]
- The government's teacher pension scheme is used. (0)[88]
- Teachers tend to use other pension schemes. (9)[89]

[80] Four schools indicated that there are not weekly or annual contracted hours; six did not respond.
[81] Two indicated that there are not; four did not respond.
[82] Four did not respond.
[83] The number of INSET days per year ranges from two to seven days. One school indicated that there is no INSET provision; three did not respond.
[84] Four schools did not respond. 'Other providers' include LEAs, the local council and various unspecified private and public providers.
[85] Three replied 'no'; five did not respond.
[86] Four did not respond.
[87] Thirteen replied 'no'; six did not respond.
[88] Seventeen replied 'no'; four did not respond.
[89] Most of these nine make arrangements available through a particular pension company. Others leave it entirely to individual teachers to arrange. Seven replied 'no'; five did not respond.

Numbers of teaching days in the year varied from 160 to 182 days per school year.

With regard to pay, the largest group of schools provide the same, basic salary to all teachers (pro rata for part-time teachers). Nine schools operate this 'flat rate' system, the annual salary per school ranging from £11,000 to £15,000. Four schools include a needs-related element to pay. For example, one school pays the same annual salary to each teacher, plus specified additional allowances where teachers have dependent children. One school calculates teacher's salaries within a narrow pay scale (£12,000 - 14,000), whilst another includes a length-of-service element in its scale. The remaining 6 schools did not provide details of teachers' pay scales.

Most indicated that there are opportunities for accredited study (see above). The sort of opportunities being referred to were quite varied. They included holiday and weekend courses, the "technical" possibility of sabbatical leave, independent study through state system (Degree courses, postgraduate study) or the Steiner movement (e.g. curative eurythmy training, Bothmer gym etc.), and day-release for study.

About 38% of responding schools indicated that one or more teachers are members of a recognised trade union. The number of union members amongst teachers ranged between one and 10 per school. However, a greater number of schools responded that none of their teachers was a member of a trade union.

5.9.2 Commonalities and differences with the maintained sector (teachers)

Just over a half of teachers in Steiner schools hold a qualification in Steiner education obtained through a school based training scheme or through a training route such as that provided by Steiner institutions such as Emerson College or the London Teacher Training Seminar. An increasing number of teachers are trained in Steiner methods by the University of Plymouth which offers a degree in Steiner education. However, only a small proportion of all Steiner teachers are also trained in the maintained system and hold QTS. Most commonly, teachers who hold both Steiner qualifications and QTS are former maintained school teachers who have switched to Steiner. Very few teachers embark on initial training that leads to both QTS and a Steiner qualification.

Little use is currently made of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities in the maintained sector, although the Steiner schools, often in collaboration with the SWSF, are mutually supportive in offering and arranging further professional development in Steiner methods for their staff. There is a healthy exchange of ideas between the 23 Steiner schools, but very little teacher development dialogue between these schools and other schools, either maintained or independent.

A common factor amongst schools which cannot fail to impress the outsider is the level of dedication by teachers who work for substantially less than the agreed national salary scales, and parents who contribute to the schools' economy often on the basis of extremely limited means and a willingness to devote time in the absence of realistic fees.

This alone should dispel the myth that Steiner schools are elite independent schools but it does raise significant tension between the need to survive and adequately reward teachers and the need to be true to Steiner's principles and ideals. These are encapsulated in the idea, revolutionary at the time and place, of educating the children of the workers and managers of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory together.

The willingness of teachers to work for less than the nationally agreed rates was the most significant means of resolving the tension in England. Whenever possible, this was offset by reduced or waived fees for teachers' own children. Most schools had reluctantly accepted a system of set fees, albeit significantly lower on average than fees charged by other independent schools[90]. Of the schools which provided data for the study, four operate a 'flat rate' pay supplemented by a needs-related element and a further nine schools had an unsupplemented 'flat rate'. Other conditions, such as arrangements to build up pensions[91] , appear to be less favourable than those for teachers in the maintained sector.

5.10 Views of Steiner Teachers on Entering State Sector and Scope for Mutual Learning

A total of 184 teachers returned a completed questionnaire, a response rate of approximately 46% (see Section 3.3). The findings from the teachers' survey need, therefore, to be interpreted with caution since more than a half of teachers did not respond. At the same time, the background data on responding teachers (Table 5.29) show that the sample of 184 teachers includes class and subject teachers and a spread of teachers according to length of teaching experience and experience of teaching in non-Steiner schools.

[90] The funding of schools is also discussed under 'Finance'in Section 5.7.1.
[91] At least seven schools leave the matter entirely to teachers themselves.

class teachers	42%
subject teachers	36%
other teachers (e.g. kindergarten)	16%
no response	5%
total years Steiner teaching:	
less than 10 years	49%
10-19 years	29%
20 years or more	21%
no response	1%
teaching experience in non-Steiner school:	
in UK maintained school	39%
in other non-Steiner school	14%
not taught in non-Steiner school	45%
no response	3%
parent of a child who is or has been in a Steiner school	75%
others	25%
no response	1%
	(n=184)

Table 5.29: Characteristics of teachers returning completed questionnaires

The survey of Steiner teachers were asked whether they would personally consider that it is a good idea or not for Steiner schools to become part of the state sector. It found that most teachers are open to exploring entry into the maintained sector (Table 5.30). Less than one in five reject the idea. There is little difference between the views of class and subject teachers. For example, both groups were equally as likely to indicate 'yes' (23% and 22% respectively) and almost the same proportion indicated 'no': 19% of class teachers[92] and 15% of subject teachers[93]. Teachers with no teaching experience outside Steiner schools are less likely to reject the idea: 12% indicated 'no'[94], compared with 19% of teachers who had taught in UK state schools[95] and 20% who had taught in other non-Steiner schools[96].

Teachers' survey: Do you personally consider that it is a good idea or not for Steiner schools to become part of the state sector?	
yes	23%
open to exploring idea	59%
no	17%
no response	2%
	(n=184)

Table 5.30: Teachers' views of Steiner schools becoming part of state sector

[92] The base for this percentage is 78 teachers.
[93] The base for this percentage is 67 teachers.
[94] The base for this percentage is 82 teachers.
[95] The base for this percentage is 72 teachers.
[96] The base for this percentage is 25 teachers.

The most frequently cited reasons for being open to entering the maintained sector were the importance of Steiner education being available to all, financial reasons and the scope for mutual learning. The first two of these – opening Steiner education to everyone and improved funding – were interrelated:

> Funding would allow Steiner schools to develop curriculum more fully, at the same time as not discriminating against families who cannot afford Steiner education.

> Enable schools to offer a full Waldorf curriculum. It would enable all parents to have a real choice in how education is provided to their children

The importance of improving the low pay of teachers and teacher recruitment was also cited, for example:

> It would improve conditions for teachers and thereby attract more teachers into Steiner Waldorf education

Mutual learning between Steiner and maintained schools was often cited, with reference frequently being made to the opportunities for "sharing expertise" that would be greater if Steiner schools were in the maintained sector. One teacher, who had had experience of Steiner schools being part of the public education sector abroad, wrote:

> From experience, I can say [being in the public sector] works as a positive experience for the pupils… and a two-way exchange for colleagues is a positive opportunity.

Reasons given by the minority who were against becoming part of the maintained sector included concern about loss of independence, state control over the curriculum, incompatibility between the pedagogical principles of Steiner education and those of the maintained sector, and having to make too many compromises which would lead to a "diluted Steiner system" and undermine the ideals of its educational philosophy. One teacher took the view that "the state already has far too much control over education to the detriment of creativity and diversity" and went on to advocate a different strategy to entering the maintained sector:

> Education belongs to the spiritual/cultural realm and should be free of politics entirely. We need to explore alternative ways to finance our schools so that we are not compromised and can show others a way forward… We are in a strong place and there is a lot of interest in our methods. As problems in children increase (allergies, speech problems [etc.]) our education will be sought more and more for its inherent curative approach.

The pattern of teachers' views varied according to school – from one school where four out of the five teachers who returned questionnaires (i.e. 80%) responded unequivocally 'yes' to becoming part of the maintained sector to another school where only one of the 23 teachers who returned questionnaires responded 'yes', 52% were open to the idea and 44% unequivocally responded 'no'. However, because response rates to the survey fluctuated considerably between schools and the total completing questionnaires at many schools is small, it is not possible to provide school-by-school findings which are

consistently valid. That there are significant differences of view between schools is, nevertheless, suggested by how schools responded to the question in the schools' survey about whether their school was interested in becoming part of the maintained sector (see Box below).

Of the 21 schools in the schools' survey, five schools (24%) were said to be interested in becoming part of the maintained sector, whilst the largest group (48%) – 10 schools – indicated that it was not possible to say. Three stated that the school was not interested and a further three did not respond.

Schools' interest in becoming part of maintained sector (source: survey of schools)

The vast majority of teachers (95%) affirmed that there are challenges to Steiner education entering the state sector[97]. As table 5.31 below shows, just over half (53%) believe that these challenges can be overcome, though a significant proportion are uncertain. Class teachers are slightly more confident about challenges being overcome: 60% replied 'yes'[98], compared with 52% of subject teachers[99]. So too are teachers with some experience of teaching in the UK maintained sector: 60% considered that challenges could be overcome[100], whilst 32% with other non-Steiner teaching experience[101] and 52% without non-Steiner teaching experience did so[102].

Teachers' survey: Can these challenges [to Steiner education entering the state sector] be overcome?	
yes	53%
possibly / maybe	6%
don't know / not sure	12%
no	10%
other response	11%
no response	7%
	(n=184)

Table 5.31: Teachers' views of whether challenges can be overcome

Challenges raised by teachers include:

- maintaining the integrity of the curriculum and pedagogy: as one teacher put it "the entire curriculum could be mechanised" and for another the challenge would be "not compromising our curriculum due to Government pressure"
- maintaining the ethos of Steiner schools, especially ensuring that it remains non-competitive and "child-centred rather than exam-centred"
- sustaining the philosophy of Steiner education and the spiritual approach to education: one teacher, for example, suggested that a challenge would be to

[97] The base for this percentage is 184 teachers.
[98] The base for this percentage is 78 teachers.
[99] The base for this percentage is 67 teachers.
[100] The base for this percentage is 72 teachers.
[101] The base for this percentage is 25 teachers.
[102] The base for this percentage is 82 teachers.

"communicate to [the] wider educational community that in essence Steiner education is a spiritual approach beyond religion"

- avoiding having to apply mainstream forms of testing and assessment: for example, concerns were expressed that testing would become mandatory and that "there would be strings attached – SATs [standard assessment tests] would creep in"
- coping with increased bureaucracy and paperwork, and the danger of being "overwhelmed by paper exercises"
- retaining the non-hierarchical collegial system of running schools and governance on the basis of the three-fold social order: for example, one teacher expressed as a challenge "being confronted by a strong hierarchical style of management with all its negative effects with regard to responsibility", whilst another was concerned that the school "will not be run by a college of teachers… and that the curriculum could become an empty shell" and for another teacher a challenge would be "loss of community feeling"
- teaching pupils from families not committed or unsympathetic to Steiner principles: hence challenges included "Parents joining who are not committed to Steiner principles", being "made to admit families not interested in Waldorf education" and "teaching children whose parents have not had to make such a big commitment"
- future changes in educational policy that may increase central control
- loss of freedom in teacher training and qualification.

One experienced Steiner teacher, with teaching experience in state and other schools, highlighted the capacity or otherwise amongst Steiner teachers to be adaptable and embrace change:

> A lot of teachers in the older, more established schools have little or no experience of life/education outside Steiner. They feel threatened by anything new, for example OCN qualifications being introduced. There needs to be a process of re-education.

The main suggestions about how challenges to entering the state sector can be overcome were mainly about procedural matters – such as the need for open-mindedness, communication and increased understanding, and a willingness to negotiate. For example:

> Real openness from State to understand philosophy of Steiner education.
>
> Not being closed to ideas (this on both sides).
>
> LEA needs to understand more about how we do things.
>
> Working closely with the LEA.
>
> By working clearly with schools and DfES to find acceptable methods.
>
> By negotiating with Government.

In addition a small number of teachers suggested that there be clear, agreed limits to what changes could be required, in order to protect the integrity of Steiner education:

> A very clear agreement/understanding as to what the bottom line is, i.e. the point beyond which Steiner cannot go.
>
> A very clear contract from the outset that states the principle of autonomy for schools in decision-making.
>
> Statutory provision of a free and independent Waldorf curriculum guided by a republican form of management.

Teachers consider that mainstream schools can learn from Steiner education (Table 5.32). The principal aspect of Steiner education that they suggest mainstream schools can learn from is its approach and insight into child development, including not pushing academic achievement too soon: as one teacher put it, "How to teach starting from an understanding of children and child development rather than from a curriculum that must be delivered". Other aspects include the balance and breadth of curriculum, the spiritual dimension of education, creativity in teaching, the importance of rhythm (of the day, the school, the year and so on), and valuing of childhood.

Teachers' survey: In your view, are there things that:	mainstream education can *learn from Steiner education*	Steiner education can *learn from mainstream education*
yes	98%	83%
no	0%	5%
no response	2%	12%
	(n=184)	(n=184)

Table 5.32: Teachers' views of potential for mutual learning between Steiner and maintained sectors

Particularly noteworthy is the finding that more than eight out of 10 believe that Steiner schools can learn from mainstream education. The potential to learn from mainstream education was most likely to be affirmed by class teachers: 89% did so[103], compared with 82% of subject teachers[104] and 77% of other teachers[105]. Agreement that there is this potential appears to be positively linked with teaching experience outside Steiner schools, particularly the UK maintained sector. Over 90% of Steiner teachers who had taught in UK maintained schools are of the view that Steiner education could learn from mainstream education (Figure 5.2).

[103] The base for this percentage is 78 teachers.
[104] The base for this percentage is 67 teachers.
[105] The base for this percentage is 30 teachers.

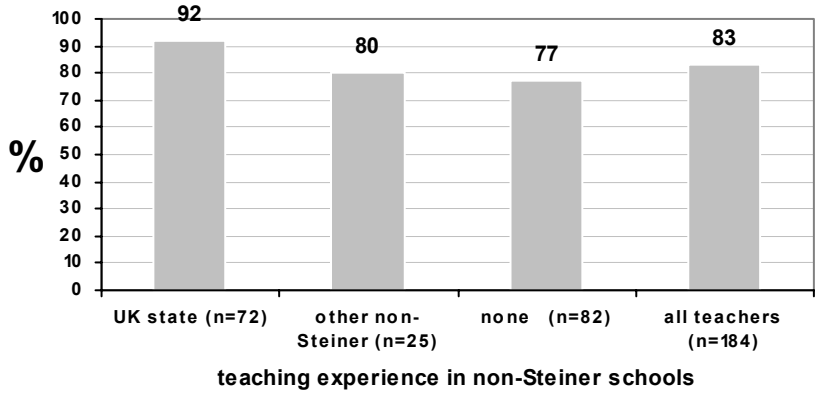

Figure 5.2: Proportion of teachers affirming that Steiner education can learn from mainstream education, by teaching experience outside Steiner schools

The main area overwhelmingly that teachers considered Steiner education could learn about from maintained education was management, organisation and administration. For example:

> Management skills.
>
> Organisational administration and innovations, good practice that may be transferrable to Steiner settings.
>
> Organisational and administrative efficiency.
>
> Organisation – being more '<u>in touch</u>' with the education system and many changes that have happened which we have not realised.
>
> Organisational strategies. Economics of time management.
>
> Clarity and precision – exact goals.
>
> Following procedures.
>
> Clear policies.
>
> How to structure the working group and distribution of work.

Other aspects of the maintained sector which numbers of Steiner teachers indicated they could learn from were:

- the more professional approach of maintained sector teachers
- classroom management, one teacher referring to the need for "constant development in classroom practice, innovation" and another to "teaching a variety of children, ethnic groups etc."
- working with older children, including "secondary school approaches to developing core skills and life skills"
- assessment and record keeping.

6. STEINER AND THE MAINTAINED SECTOR

In Section 6.1, informed by the results of the literature review and the research findings, the scope for mutual sharing and learning between the Steiner and maintained sectors is discussed. Opportunities to facilitate collaboration and mutual learning between the two sectors are identified, and recommendations made to enhance the scope for such collaboration and mutual learning.

Section 6.2 draws attention to some of the most important challenges, which emerge from the findings of this study, in the event of Steiner schools becoming part of the state-funded, maintained sector in England[106]. There would be challenges for both the maintained sector (central government and LEAs) and for Steiner education. Initiatives are recommended that could be taken to address these challenges.

6.1 Scope for mutual sharing and learning: discussion and recommendations

Some common misconceptions about Steiner schools were set out in Section 2.4 - that they are elitist, 'free schools', with no set curriculum, in which children can choose whether or not they attend lessons, part of a religious cult that indoctrinates children in its beliefs, teach mostly art and therefore suitable for children who find a more traditional academic curriculum difficult, and the last refuge for children who have failed in other schools. The research findings strongly confirm that these are indeed misconceptions. There is, however, a very significant issue of public education about what Steiner schools are that will need to be addressed if the Steiner and maintained sectors are to work more closely together.

There are many overlapping elements, as well as differences, between Steiner and maintained schools, discussed in some detail in the previous section. Taking each area of education in turn, these overlaps and differences are summarised here.

With regard to the curriculum, Steiner education includes all the recognised subjects of the National Curriculum in England. Aspects distinctive to, or differences of emphasis in, Steiner education, include:

- teaching science through, observation, imagination and the engagement of pupils' artistic faculties
- the greater attention given to modern foreign languages
- the emphasis on crafts, handwork, and practical activities
- the later introduction of ICT
- the importance attached to art and the development of aesthetic sensibilities
- inclusion of subjects unique to Steiner education, such as eurythmy
- the nature and significance of religious education lessons.

[106] Not all these challenges would apply to Steiner schools becoming academy schools, since academies are a different category of school: academies are schools which are independently managed and have private sponsors, but are funded mainly by central government.

On national tests, there is a substantial difference. National tests are regarded as taking away time from the teaching of the Steiner curriculum. Assessment is integral to the Steiner approach and national tests are not necessarily seen as helpful. Pupils are however entered for pragmatic reasons. With regard to pedagogy, both the mainstream and Steiner education traditions in the UK regard the individual child as important and schools as having a part to play in development of the whole child. Steiner education takes a particular perspective and entails a set of practices which relate to each other in order to give Steiner schools their character. These include:

- the role of the teacher understood as a sacred task in helping each child's soul and spirit grow, which underpins the commitment to each pupil and is the basis of making the class teacher-pupil relationship work out over eight years
- curriculum and pedagogy designed to be in harmony with the different phases of development children are believed to go through
- curriculum activities undertaken for their value in developing the child's soul, not for their potential future utility
- structure of the daily two hour main lesson, followed by four or five subject lessons for all age groups
- governing of pedagogy by a strong sense of rhythm that is pervasive throughout the schools
- use of distinctive pedagogical practices, such as child studies and class studies and meditative picturing of the child
- emphasis on whole class teaching and the artistry, autonomy and authority of the individual teacher
- emphasis on the authority of adults as a necessary precursor to the attainment of freedom by the pupil on reaching maturity.

With regard to SEN, Steiner schools provide both conventional forms of provision and others that are unique to Steiner education. Steiner-specific methods of SEN would include curative eurythmy, which is claimed to be especially therapeutic in its effects and is a development of the art of movement (eurythmy) developed by Rudolf Steiner.

The philosophy underpinning Steiner schools is quite distinctive. Steiner education is grounded in the philosophy developed by Rudolf Steiner, known as anthroposophy, and this philosophy informs and guides the education. The principles of anthroposophy are based on a particular understanding of child development, and are the foundation of other concepts integral to Steiner schools' pedagogy such as willing/feeling/thinking, the role of the teacher, the emphasis on valuing childhood, and the collegial running of the school which includes collective study of the anthroposophical underpinnings of Steiner education. Equally, it is clear that the Steiner school curriculum is not designed to guide and encourage young people into becoming adherents of anthroposophy. Rather, Steiner education and the maintained sector share the goal of enabling pupils to grow into adults capable of thinking for themselves and making independent judgements.

Concerning leadership and management, there is a marked contrast between Steiner and maintained schools. The research confirmed that Steiner schools do not have a formal

hierarchy amongst teachers and that responsibility in the vast majority of schools belongs to the college of teachers which is intended to embody and develop the spiritual life of the school, as well as to exercise responsibility for the school's educational activities and management. The contrast between the non-hierarchical arrangements of Steiner schools and the traditional hierarchy of maintained schools should be moderated slightly by recognising that the collegial approach of Steiner education is in tune with certain of the key ideas of modernising leadership. In particular, there is a great deal of interest in the maintained sector in distributed leadership and in creating more flexible forms of leadership and management as part of the 'modernising' agenda (Woods and Woods 2004).

On parental involvement, parents/carers support Steiner schools in many ways which are common to them and the maintained sector (through fund-raising and Parent-Teacher Associations, for example), though their expected commitment is greater in some regards – for example through family support for the Steiner philosophy and ethos and in numerous ways that help maintain schools which are financially constrained.

With regard to teachers, a striking contrast with the maintained sector is the lower pay and less favourable conditions that Steiner teachers enjoy. In addition, high proportions of teachers in Steiner schools do not have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) which is an essential requirement to teach in the maintained sector. Just over half the teachers employed in Steiner schools have been trained in Steiner institutions – either schools with a school based training programme or other Steiner institutions offering teacher training. This compares with a figure of just over quarter of the teachers being trained through programmes that would grant QTS within the maintained sector. There is thus a marked preference within the schools for Steiner based training, although just under a quarter of the teachers, although subject graduates or diploma holders, hold no teacher training qualification at all.

It is clear that, whilst there are elements and practices in common between Steiner and maintained schools, there are substantial differences. Moreover, many of the distinctive features of Steiner education are grounded in the principles of anthroposophy and Steiner's educational philosophy. The educational impact, viability and character of specific practices are influenced in significant ways by this context and the reinforcing effects that they have on each other[107]. It is of crucial importance to note, therefore, that adoption of Steiner practices in mainstream education has to be approached with caution. Transferring practices between schools of differing philosophies is nether straightforward nor in all cases appropriate (Uhrmacher 1997), and may not achieve the expected consequences because they are starved of the reciprocity of the school context in which they originate. The point equally applies to transfers of practice in the other direction – from mainstream to Steiner education. In recognition of this, there is a challenge, then, for central government, LEAs, Steiner schools and the SWSF to encourage workable ways of exploring mutual sharing and learning between the Steiner and maintained sectors which take full account of their different philosophical foundations.

[107] Armon (1997) refers to the mutual effects of these interdependent features as reciprocity.

There are themes to be found in both Steiner and mainstream education, in relation to concepts such as rhythm, narrative and holistic education highlighted in the literature review (Section 4.1.4), relational consciousness and the capacity for spiritual awareness discussed in connection with pedagogy (Section 5.4.3) and distributed leadership highlighted in discussing the college of teachers system (Section 5.7.3). The potential exists to utilise such themes as bridges to facilitate dialogue and interaction between the Steiner and maintained sectors. These 'bridging themes' have an important role to play in exploring the possibilities for mutual sharing and learning between the two sectors.

> **Recommendation 1:** Government, LEAs, maintained and Steiner schools, and the SWSF to develop workable ways of exploring mutual sharing and learning between the Steiner and maintained sectors maintained sectors which
>
> - take full account of their different philosophical foundations
> - acknowledge the challenges of transfer between schools with different educational philosophies
> - utilise 'bridging themes' to facilitate dialogue and interaction between the two sectors.

There are a number of aspects of Steiner school practice that might readily inform good practice in maintained schools. These include the early introduction and approach to modern foreign languages, development of speaking and listening through an emphasis on oral work, the combination of class and subject teaching for younger children, the development of good pace in lessons through an emphasis on rhythm and Steiner schools' approach to art and creativity. Others might be more controversial but could be the basis for profitable dialogue – for example, the emphasis on child development in guiding the curriculum and examinations; and the attention given to teachers' heightened awareness (in collective child study and the meditative picturing of the child for example). There is some evidence that the strong relationship formed by the class teacher through staying with the same children for eight years has a beneficial effect, not only on the teacher's relationship with the class, but also on the relationships between pupils within the class which were almost invariably observed to be productive.

Aspects of Steiner schools' leadership and management may also have the potential to inform practice in maintained schools. The relevance of their experience in seeking to operationalise a non-hierarchical, collegial form of running schools, given trends in mainstream leadership, has been noted. Of particular interest to the maintained sector would be to know more about the effectiveness of changes introduced by some Steiner schools with the intention of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the collegial system and the practical operation and outcomes of its distinctive features such as the integration of collegial study and teachers' reflective activity ('inner work') and the claimed impact on pedagogy and teachers' professional development.

Recommendation 2: Government, LEAs, maintained and Steiner schools and the SWSF to explore the potential of the following to inform practice in maintained schools:

- early introduction and approach to modern foreign languages
- the combination of class and subject teaching for younger children
- development of speaking and listening through an emphasis on oral work
- the development of good pace in lessons through an emphasis on rhythm
- the emphasis on child development in guiding the curriculum and examinations
- the approach to art and creativity
- the attention given to teachers' reflective activity and heightened awareness (in collective child study for example)
- collegial structure of leadership and management, including collegial study.

There are aspects of mainstream education which could inform good practice in Steiner schools. Some of these aspects were identified by Steiner teachers through the teachers' survey (Section 5.10). The areas of mainstream education that could usefully be explored by Steiner schools include management skills and ways of improving organisational and administrative efficiency, classroom management, working with older children, and assessment and record keeping.

Recommendation 3: Government and agencies such as the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), LEAs, maintained and Steiner schools, the SWSF and Steiner teacher trainers to explore the potential of the following maintained sector practices to inform practice in Steiner schools:

- mainstream management skills and ways of improving organisational and administrative efficiency
- classroom management in the maintained sector
- working with older children in maintained secondary schools
- assessment and record keeping in the maintained sector

Transferring practices is not the only aspect of mutual sharing and learning where there may be potential benefits. The research team is convinced that there is much scope for mutual learning and stimulation of fresh thinking about existing practices, amongst both Steiner and mainstream teachers, through dialogue involving both groups and greater mutual understanding. Teachers themselves through this would illuminate areas of similarity and of difference, and where they may be able to learn by looking at their present assumptions, pedagogies, leadership practices and other parts of the everyday life

of their respective schools through the perspective of an alternative school culture. The potential benefits are two-way between Steiner and mainstream schools.

> **Recommendation 4:** Government, LEAs, maintained and Steiner schools and the SWSF to promote opportunities for professional interaction and dialogue between Steiner and mainstream educators.

In any case, the potential for sharing effective Steiner practice needs to be informed by evidence of their benefits (and possible shortcomings) and greater understanding of how they work, and of actual experience in their transfer to or adaptation in mainstream education. Research evaluations concerning Steiner school policies and practices are also important for Steiner schools' own development: a robust evidence base is essential to the continual improvement of Steiner pedagogy in a societal context of change. Yet, the research evidence base concerning Steiner education to date and its effectiveness in comparison to maintained school practices is in need of strengthening. This could be achieved through increased academic and practitioner research which steadily accumulates and shares knowledge and understanding of Steiner practice. More robust studies need to be conducted concerning the relative effectiveness of practices in the Steiner and the maintained sectors.

> **Recommendation 5:** Government, LEAs, agencies such as the TTA and National College for School Leadership (NCSL), maintained and Steiner schools, and the SWSF to promote and support academic and practitioner research which strengthens
> - the evidence base concerning Steiner education
> - the relative effectiveness of Steiner and maintained sector practices, and
> - the transfer to or adaptation within mainstream education of Steiner practices.

6.2 Entering the maintained sector: challenges and recommendations

The research findings from this study will, it is hoped, be helpful to organisations and individuals deliberating on the question of Steiner schools entering the maintained sector and becoming publicly funded[108]. The suggested initiatives below highlight ways in which the challenges involved in such a change of status might be addressed if some or all Steiner schools in England decide and are enabled to become maintained schools.

The main challenges identified in this study concern admissions, curriculum, national tests and assessment, pedagogy, Steiner educational philosophy, leadership, management and accountability, teachers, and accommodation. Under each of these headings, each challenge is stated and briefly explained, then the recommended initiative (or initiatives)

[108] It is not part of the remit of the research team to advise central government, LEAs or Steiner schools in England whether entry to the maintained sector is desirable. That is a matter for those organisations themselves.

to address this challenge is stated. The challenges and recommended initiatives are not set out in order of importance.

Admissions

Challenge: bringing Steiner schools' admissions processes into line with those in the maintained sector

The challenge is the need to ensure:

- transparency and so make explicit all the criteria being applied (some admissions policies are currently detailed, others much less so);
- admission is open to all pupils in accordance with regulations which apply to the maintained sector: Criteria, such as those which disfavour families whose children have not been in Steiner education or which are considered not suitable to Steiner education, would need to be examined and adjusted as appropriate. For example, Steiner teachers may no longer be able to select pupils according to whether they "fit the constellation of the existing class".

Recommendation 6: Steiner schools to review their admissions procedures and criteria with a view to ensuring that they are transparent and open to all pupils in accordance with regulations which apply to the maintained sector, and to examine the implications for their schools of consequent changes in admissions procedures and criteria.

Curriculum

Challenge: providing for sufficient flexibility in a system that prescribes a National Curriculum

Whilst there are large overlaps between the national curriculum in England and the curriculum of Steiner schools, to retain the distinctive character of Steiner education would require acceptance of a substantial degree of flexibility and departure from the framework of the National Curriculum. For example, Steiner schools maintain breadth and balance right up to Years 12 and 13, but this is at the expense of offering fewer GCSEs; the Steiner curriculum for history and geography is based on child developmental principles rather than a more academic view of these subjects; the Steiner curriculum for science is based on Goethe's observational approach; and use of ICT does not begin until upper school.

Recommendation 7:.Government to facilitate disapplication of Steiner schools from the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Challenge: recognition and acceptance of the distinctive character of Steiner schools' religious education

Recognition and acceptance would be needed of the nature of religious education in Steiner schools which is intended to develop in pupils a feeling for the religious dimension of life, for the working of the divine in nature and for good and evil and

right and wrong. The focus is on developing an experiential relationship and awakening feelings to the spiritual and encouraging an openness to a spiritual interpretation of the world. These lessons have a greater significance and connection with the broad curriculum of the school than religious education lessons in most maintained non-faith schools because of the underpinning of anthroposophy governing the approach to this area of the curriculum.

Recommendation 8: Government and LEAs to give specific consideration to the nature of religious education; Government to establish if action in relation to the law and regulations concerning religious education in maintained schools would be needed to ensure that religious education in Steiner schools could retain its distinctive character.

National tests and assessment

Challenge: incorporating Steiner education's different approach to assessment and examinations

Steiner teachers actively and regularly assess pupils' progress, but the means of doing this differ in some important regards from how it is done in the maintained sector. In particular, administration of tests and examinations do not sit comfortably within Steiner schools' educational philosophy and practice. Part of the challenge for Government and LEAs is to be open to ways of assessing progress that may be different but achieve the purposes of assessment and contribute to learning. Developing such openness requires an appreciation of a particular component of Steiner practice – in this case assessment of pupils - in the full context of the aims, theoretical underpinning and practices of Steiner education. Another part of the challenge is to be supportive in the development and acceptance of alternative ways by which pupils leaving Steiner schools can demonstrate capability for further study and employment (some current practice in England and New Zealand was noted in Section 5.4.1).

Another aspect of this challenge is devising appropriate ways of evaluating Steiner schools' educational provision and outcomes and comparing Steiner and other schools in the maintained sector. Steiner schools acknowledge, for pragmatic reasons, the need to teach pupils GCSEs and A levels. However, their policy of minimising time on the examination syllabus, and the different ages at which national examinations (particularly GCSEs) are taken, make comparisons difficult in an education system where assessing performance by such measures is accorded the highest priority. League tables of school performances are therefore unhelpful means of comparison for government and its agencies as well as for parents/carers. Another consequence is that area wide statistics (on passes in national tests) may be depressed with a resultant impact on perceptions of LEA performance measured in terms of targets for national test results[109]. The challenge is to acknowledge, and to develop as

[109] GCSE passes in league tables, for example, are based on the summer examinations taken by pupils who turn 16 years of age in the year prior to 31st August. In Steiner schools, however, pupils are generally

appropriate, other ways of evaluating and comparing educational outcomes. A number of Steiner schools are developing alternative ways of accrediting pupils' achievement (such as OCN awards), and, whilst this is not being done in order to make comparisons between schools, such developments may contribute to appropriate ways of identifying and comparing Steiner schools' educational outcomes.

Recommendation 9:.Government and LEAs to ensure that they, and agencies such as Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) and QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority), are informed by a developed understanding and appreciation, in the full context of Steiner education, of how Steiner schools assess progress and facilitate pupils' learning and of other distinctive aspects of Steiner schools (Recommendations 12 and 18); this to be developed internally, through opportunities for elected representatives and officials concerned with Steiner education to build up such understanding and appreciation, and/or facilitated though external advisors.

Recommendation 10: Government and LEAs to support the development and acceptance of alternative ways by which pupils leaving Steiner schools can demonstrate capability for further study and employment, building on current practice.

Recommendation 11: Government and LEAs, in co-operation with the SWSF, to develop appropriate ways of identifying and comparing Steiner schools' educational outcomes.

Pedagogy

Challenge: openness towards unconventional modes of assessment which inform pedagogical practice in Steiner schools

Unconventional assessment practices, such as meditative picturing of the child, were discussed in Section 5.4.3. In accommodating these in the maintained sector, an approach which is open to them – i.e. accepting their legitimacy as procedures without necessarily judging them - will be required of Government and LEAs.

Recommendation 12: Government and LEAs to ensure that they, and other relevant agencies, are informed by a developed understanding and appreciation of Steiner schools' unconventional pedagogical practices, this to be an integral part of Recommendation 9.

Challenge: accommodating the later start to formal schooling in Steiner schools

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entered for fewer GCSE subjects and do not sit all GCSE examinations in the same year of schooling as the mainstream sector, but often start them later.

Class 1 in Steiner schools is equivalent to Year 2 in the maintained sector in England. Some schools reported that relationships with nearby primary schools could be adversely affected by pupils leaving the primary schools at the end of Year 1. Other Steiner schools were concerned by the loss of kindergarten pupils to the maintained sector at the point where children were no longer eligible for nursery vouchers. Some reported that parents struggled to find fees and then gave up.

> **Recommendation 13:** Government to review and address implications arising from the later start to formal schooling in Steiner schools.

Challenge: enhancing the capacity for self-critical review of Steiner education in dialogue with mainstream education

Being in the publicly accountable maintained sector would reinforce the importance of ensuring that critical, self-scrutiny of anthroposophy, and the educational policies and practices based on it, is sustained by Steiner teachers and others associated with Steiner education. There are theoretical developments, research findings, polices and practices in mainstream education, concerning issues such as child development, social justice and inclusion, pedagogy and leadership and management, which would stimulate such critical self-scrutiny. Openness to learn from mainstream education was apparent from the survey of teachers, which found that eight out of ten Steiner teachers believe that Steiner education can learn from mainstream education. Entry into the maintained sector would challenge Steiner schools and the Steiner education movement to expand significantly opportunities to do this and, where appropriate, adjust Steiner educational theory and practices.

> **Recommendation 14:** Steiner schools to ensure that professional development enables teachers and other relevant staff to become better acquainted with developments in theory, research, policies and practices in mainstream education and be prepared to review Steiner educational theories and practices in light of this.

Challenge: balancing teacher accountability and the authority and autonomy of the teacher

A distinctive feature of Steiner pedagogy is the central role given to the artistry, autonomy and authority of the individual teacher. This is confirmed by the findings of the study, but the research also showed in at least some Steiner schools arrangements had been instituted to facilitate some degree of mutual responsibility for observation and improvement of classroom teaching practices. The need to review and enhance the effectiveness of such arrangements and strike a balance between teacher accountability and the authority and autonomy of the teacher would become more pressing once in the maintained sector.

> **Recommendation 15:**.Steiner schools to promote continual improvement of arrangements to facilitate mutual responsibility

amongst teachers for observation and improvement of classroom teaching practices, this to include

- evaluation of innovations being tried by some Steiner schools
- sharing of findings and experience amongst Steiner schools concerning these
- enhancing awareness of maintained sector practices and adapting these for Steiner schools as appropriate.

Steiner educational philosophy

Challenge: promoting understanding of Steiner education and its foundation in a particular philosophy (anthroposophy)

It is clear that certain philosophical concepts are an essential component to understanding Steiner schools' curriculum, pedagogy and leadership arrangements. These concepts are based in anthroposophy. To the general population in England, some are likely to be familiar (such as those based in Christian influences) and some likely to be less so (such as the integration of intuitive, spiritual practices) (Grant 1999, Uhrmacher 1997). It is difficult for many people, therefore, to understand how to view anthroposophy: as a religion and, hence, Steiner schools as faith schools, or as an alternative form of education without religious connections. Assumptions and misconceptions about Steiner education are quite widespread, as was noted in Section 2.4. Some interpretations of Steiner education can lead to public debates of controversial issues, such as those concerned with social justice, an example of which was highlighted in the literature review (Section 4.1.3).

It would, therefore, be a significant challenge for Government and LEAs to promote an accurate understanding of Steiner education and the educational philosophy in which it is grounded so that people are able to come to a well-informed view. This would be part of the task of enabling Steiner schools to be integrated partners in the maintained sector. A particular need would be to provide information to parents/carers so that they are able to make an informed choice of school where a maintained Steiner school is an option. Part of the task would involve addressing the terminology of Steiner education, much of which is unfamiliar to many.

The findings from this research project support the view that Steiner schools are not faith schools seeking to nurture pupils into a particular religious belief. It has been emphasised to the research team that Steiner education's aim is to develop children's critical abilities so that they are able to make their own choices about others' beliefs and claims (including those of Rudolf Steiner himself); and the research gives some support to the view that Steiner schools do indeed help to encourage critical thinking amongst pupils. (Further research, focused on this question, would be needed to provide conclusive evidence.) The challenge to Steiner schools and the Steiner education movement, which exists now but would be more pressing as maintained schools, is to explain to external stakeholders what anthroposophy is, how and why it

is important to Steiner education, and why it is not right to see it as a faith or dogma, and to promote greater understanding of Steiner schools' educational practices.

> **Recommendation 16:** Government and LEAs to undertake or otherwise facilitate a programme of action aimed at promoting an informed understanding of Steiner education and the educational philosophy in which it is grounded, and to include as a component of this, communication of appropriate information for parents/carers so that they are able to make an informed choice of school where a maintained Steiner school is an option.

> **Recommendation 17:** Steiner schools to devise and carry though a strategy for enhancing understanding amongst the general public and particular stakeholders (such as parents/carers, LEA officers and mainstream teachers) of Steiner education, including its foundation in anthroposophy and why it is not right to see it as a faith or dogma.

Leadership, management and accountability

Challenge: finding ways of enabling the Steiner schools' collegial system of leadership and management to work effectively in a maintained system which has traditionally required a single organisational head

The challenge for Government is to establish a relationship with Steiner schools which enables Government to trust teachers to discharge their responsibilities within their collegial 'distributed leadership' framework. This is likely to depend on a number of factors. One is the degree to which Steiner schools address challenges to enable the collegial structure to work in the context of the maintained sector. Another is the establishment of suitable accountability procedures (Recommendation 24). A third is the understanding and appreciation Government and LEAs have of the nature and significance of the collegial approach to school leadership and management in Steiner schools. The challenge to Government and LEAs is to be pro-active in developing and introducing new ways of working with schools outside the traditional pattern of dealing with a single headteacher. This is a challenge for governments wherever alternative ways of running schools are tried, such as co-principalships in New Zealand (Court 2003). A specific issue is the degree to which the requirement for headteachers of maintained schools in England to hold the National Professional Qualification of Headship (NPQH) can or needs to be adapted or changed to accommodate a collegial system of dispersed responsibility.

It would be important to ensure that in Steiner schools, in the absence of a single head teacher in the traditional sense, there are internal school arrangements which ensure responses are made with due speed and that external stakeholders know who the appropriate contact points are. Some Steiner schools have already introduced innovative arrangements to facilitate this, such as the introduction of education managers. The challenge for Steiner schools would be to ensure that these work

effectively and that all Steiner schools entering the maintained sector adopt suitable arrangements. As part of the maintained sector, the responsibility on Steiner schools to respond to enquiries, requests for information and opportunities or requests to participate in policy initiatives (from LEAs, central government, other maintained schools and other parties) would be greater than presently as independent schools.

> **Recommendation 18:** Government and LEAs to ensure that they, and other agencies including the NCSL, are informed by a developed understanding and appreciation of Steiner schools' collegial structure of leadership and management, this to be an integral part of Recommendation 9.
>
> **Recommendation 19:** Government, the NCSL and LEAs to consider how they might adapt their arrangements and expectations for working with schools in order to accommodate collegially run schools.
>
> **Recommendation 20:** Steiner schools to ensure they have leadership and management arrangements which facilitate efficient interaction with external contacts (this can be facilitated by drawing on and evaluating innovations already introduced by Steiner schools).

Challenge: the need for new skills and capacity for change in Steiner schools

As with all phases of change, entry into the maintained sector would require openness to change which some in Steiner schools would find easier to adopt than others. The challenge to Steiner schools would be to encourage an openness to change that would balance the importance of retaining the integrity of Steiner education with requirements to alter some established patterns of activity and expectations. This is not to suggest that Steiner schools have not experienced change or themselves introduced change or innovation. The research evidence provides examples of Steiner schools in England introducing innovations (such as the adoption of OCN awards and reforms to leadership and management structure). However, entry into the maintained sector would introduce a different and more intensive degree of change, continuing beyond the transitional phase, since successive policy initiatives are a characteristic of public sector education systems. A challenge for Steiner schools would be to develop and sustain a continuing capacity for change.

Steiner schools would, as maintained schools, become part of a wider community in which they were expected to establish new relationships or extend existing relationships with other organisations (neighbouring schools, LEAs, central government, agencies involved in multi-agency working, etc.), especially in a policy climate which promotes collaboration and partnerships within and beyond the public sector and encourages a collective sense of responsibility amongst local schools towards all pupils in a local area (Woods et al. 2003). Such external relationships between Steiner schools in England are not completely absent presently, but

collaborative relationships with maintained schools, for example, are few and far between. The challenge for Steiner schools would be to develop the capacity to forge and sustain new multiple external relationships and partnerships.

Entry into the maintained sector would also involve more attention being given in Steiner schools to record keeping and accountability procedures, which would be a different approach than presently.

> **Recommendation 21:** Steiner schools to identify in what ways leadership and management arrangements and the skills and capabilities available in schools need to be improved in order to develop and sustain a continuing capacity for change, and to devise a strategy for bringing about these improvements.
>
> **Recommendation 22:** Steiner schools to give attention to what changes might be needed in their leadership and management arrangements and the skills and capabilities available in schools in order to forge and sustain new multiple external relationships and partnerships.
>
> **Recommendation 23:** Steiner schools to review, with an input from representatives of the maintained sector, where and how record keeping and accountability procedures would need to be improved.

Challenge: enhancing the accountability and transparency of Steiner education in appropriate ways

The other side of the coin to Government trusting Steiner teachers with the discretion and freedom inherent in Steiner pedagogy and the collegial running of schools is the accountability of Steiner schools as publicly funded schools. The challenge in this regard is to establish procedures which make teachers publicly accountable through, for example, the publication of test results, without requiring Steiner schools to adopt pedagogies, assessment procedures and management structures which undermine the essentials of its educational philosophy.

Policies and practices of Steiner schools in the maintained sector would need to be as open as those in other maintained schools. That is, stakeholders, including parents/carers, pupils and representatives of central government and LEAs, would be entitled to ask and have access to information about these policies and practices in the same way as is possible presently within the maintained sector – for example, in relation to matters such as admissions, child protection, charging for trips/visits etc. This may be challenging for Steiner schools with regard to certain distinctive features of their educational provision, such as religious education lessons, modes of assessment such as meditative picturing of the child in child study, and grouping of children by temperament where the criteria for grouping is not shared with pupils. Steiner school pedagogical and other practices would also need to be open to research

in the same way as those in the maintained sector so that their development is evidence-informed.

> **Recommendation 24:** Government and LEAs to explore, in co-operation with the SWSF, different kinds of accountability procedures that meet the need for public accountability whilst not affecting the essential educational practices of Steiner schools.

> **Recommendation 25:** Steiner schools to review, with an input from representatives of the maintained sector, where information about and accessibility to practices and procedures need to be improved so that they are as open and transparent as is expected in the maintained sector; the review also to make recommendations about research into Steiner education.

Teachers

Challenge: requirements for teachers' qualifications in maintained sector

The large majority of full time Steiner teachers are educated to graduate or diploma level and almost all have further training as teachers or instructors, in most cases in Steiner institutions. Relatively small proportions of staff in each of the Steiner schools have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Absence of QTS would currently debar these teachers from teaching in maintained schools. At the same time, it is clear from the study that full time teachers in Steiner schools are expected to have an understanding of anthroposophical principles and a good level of knowledge about Steiner's pedagogical theories, as well as practical competency in a range of skills not emphasised in the training of maintained school teachers - for example artistic chalk drawing or oral story telling. There are clearly, therefore, quite serious limitations on the free exchange of teachers between the two sectors. There should not be a strong expectation of teacher exchange between Steiner and other schools in the maintained sector, in the short to medium term at least.

> **Recommendation 26:**. Consideration to be given by Steiner schools, the SWSF and Government to commissioning an institution, such as the University of Plymouth, that has expertise in both Steiner and mainstream teacher training, to report on the equivalence of qualifications; Steiner schools to give consideration to increasing recruitment to their teacher training courses of teachers who already hold QTS from the maintained sector.

Accommodation

Challenges: assisting Steiner schools to find and obtain suitable sites/accommodation

Several Steiner schools in England are restricted by the accommodation they are housed in, yet are unable to afford in their present circumstances to move to more appropriate buildings and grounds. Premises, maintenance and classrooms emerged

as a prominent concern in the survey (Section 5.7.1 in the discussion of finance).There would be a likely need for some schools, if admitted to the maintained sector, to move into more suitable premises. Support from LEAs would be particularly important in meeting this challenge.

> **Recommendation 27:** Government and, particularly, LEAs to provide support in finding and obtaining suitable sites/accommodation where appropriate.

In conclusion, in a maintained system which requires schools to work within a framework of expectations and guidance, reinforced by an inspection system, being sufficiently flexible to accommodate distinctive educational philosophies and pedagogies is a challenge. This requires government to develop *institutional flexibility*, i.e. to develop, as part of its organisational culture and the professional orientation it encourages, respect for different and innovative ways of providing education and a predisposition to dismantle unnecessary barriers and disincentives to diversity.

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APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURE, SOURCES AND RESULTS OF THE SYSTEMATIC SEARCH FOR PUBLICATIONS REPORTING EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON STEINER SCHOOL PROVISION

Electronic data base searches

The data base searches undertaken are summarised in Table 1. In each case the initial list of publications generated by the search strings was filtered in two stages.

- First, publications not about Steiner schooling, short articles (five pages or fewer), TES articles, publications clearly not reporting empirical research, non-PhD theses and conference proceedings were excluded.
- Then, for the remainder, where necessary, further information was sought (e.g. via abstracts or the text of the article) and where from this information it was clear that the publication was not reporting empirical research, these were filtered out.

The resultant list of publications after these stages comprised the number of empirical research publications for systematic review.

Table 1: Electronic Data Base Searches

Data Base	British Educational Index (1976 – March 2004)	Australian Education Index (1976 – June 2004)	EBSCO Host (multi-disciplinary)	ERIC - CIJE & RIE (1966 – 1983, 1984 – 1989 and 1990 – June 2004)	First Search, Electronic Collections on line (ECO) (multi disciplinary)	WorldCat data for books and theses (multi disciplinary)
Search strings	'Steiner' 'Waldorf'	'Steiner' 'Waldorf'	'Steiner' 'Waldorf' 'Steiner AND Education'	'Steiner' 'Waldorf'	'Steiner' 'Waldorf'	*various***
Empirical research publications*	4	3	1	12	0	2

*Some publications appeared in more than one of the resultant lists of empirical research publications.
**Search strings containing 'Steiner' or 'Waldorf', plus 'education' or 'schools', generated very large numbers of publications, substantial numbers of which were either written by Rudolf Steiner or about him, or source books for schools. 'Waldorf schools research' generated two empirical research publications. In the time available further refinement and perusal of searchers via WorldCat was not possible.

Research Bulletin (Journal of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education, US)

Research Bulletins were searched on line from the first issue published in January 1996 to January 2004, Vol IX, No 1[110]. Four empirical research publications were identified.

E-mail Correspondence

E-mail enquiries were made with researchers in the UK and overseas known to the team and to follow up information on research projects and possible empirical research

[110] A short article in Research Bulletin, Vol 6, No 2, 2001 prompted an e-mail enquiry to its author, David Jelinek, who sent an electronic copy of this research monograph in response.

publications discovered through the systematic searches[111]. Responses informed us of work in progress or, in some cases, confirmed that no further research had been undertaken since research publications of which we were aware. Three additional empirical research publications were identified.

Other Sources

Other sources searched were:

- Online Waldorflibrary (www.waldorflibrary.org).
- Website of Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) (www.awsna.org)[112].
- Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications Website (www.steinerschoolbooks.com).
- Waldorf Education in Canada website (www.Waldorf.ca).
- Paideia (a research journal for Waldorf education, published by Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, now no longer published)[113].
- Steiner Education (a magazine for parents, teachers and others interested in Steiner Waldorf education[114]) Volumes 29-37 (1996-2004). One empirical research publication was identified.
- Personal archive (Philip and Glenys Woods). Three empirical research publications were identified.
- Internet searches.
- Enquiries during the study to key Steiner national informants and visits to Steiner schools.

[111] Researchers contacted included Ida Oberman, Ian Rivers, Douglas Gerwin, Patti Smith, Susan Howard, Jill Golden, Christopher Schaefer, Nina Ashur, David Jelinek, Bruce Uhrmacher and Bo Dahlin.
[112] Guidance on the search results was sought from Douglas Gerwin, Co-director of the US Research Institute for Waldorf Education ('E-mail Correspondence' above).
[113] In the time available a limited search of Paideia, which is not available electronically, was possible only.
[114] Formerly *Child and Man* from 1930 till 1995.

APPENDIX 2

PROTOCOL FOR SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This form is for use in reviewing empirical research publications, i.e. publications/papers which have been selected from the results of the literature searches and which appear to report empirical research investigating Steiner school education.

Reviewer: _____

Title of publication	
Author(s)	
Reference details	
Confirmed that it should be reviewed? ***If no, proceed no further***	
Institutional affiliation of author(s) when research reported	
Author(s)' connection with Steiner movement when research reported	
Source of funding for reported research	

Description

Aims of study	
Country/ies	(where empirical research was carried out)
Year(s)	(when empirical research was carried out)
Type of study	(e.g. survey, case study)
Methodology	(summary of research method/s and of method of analysis)
Theoretical framework that shapes or informs the methodology	(e.g. postmodernist, positivist, specific theorist(s) - e.g. Piaget, Steiner - Marxist)
<u>Empirical Findings 1</u>: Are there findings on relationship between Steiner schooling and learning/pupil achievement?	
Is the relationship claimed to be:	positive negative no relationship found mixed (specify)
<u>Empirical Findings 2</u>: Is comparative research on Steiner and mainstream schools?	
<u>Empirical Findings 3</u>:	

Summarise other findings on Steiner school education	

Judgement of some of the implications for Project Aims

Are there any examples of potential good practice in the publication?	
Do the findings throw light on differences and commonalities between Steiner and maintained schools?	
Do the findings provide insights into the potential challenges to Steiner schools entering the maintained sector and how these may be overcome?	
Do the findings provide insights into collaboration and mutual learning between the two sectors and how this may be facilitated?	
Does the research include any Steiner schools in England?	

Evaluation[115]

How *valid* are the conclusions, i.e. to what extent are the claims valid interpretations of, and supported by, the data presented? Could other interpretations of the data be equally valid?	
How *generalisable* are the data and conclusions, i.e. to what extent are they likely to be characteristic of other settings, cultures and countries?	
How *important* are the data and conclusions for	

[115] This set of question is taken from a review of distributed leadership undertaken for the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) (Bennett, N., Harvey, J. A., Wise, C. and Woods, P. A. (2003) *Desk Study Review of Distributed Leadership*. Nottingham: NCSL/CEPAM. Available at: http://www.ncsl.org.uk/literaturereviews).

increasing our understanding of relationship between Steiner schooling and learning/pupil achievement? To what extent do they present new knowledge or add significantly to pre-existing knowledge, understanding and interpretation?	

Further Empirical Research

Are there, in the references, any publications reporting empirical research on Steiner school education, not already identified through our literature searches?	

APPENDIX 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Joan Armon (1997) The Waldorf Curriculum as a Framework for Moral Education: One dimension of a fourfold system, paper presented at Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association (AERA), Chicago.

This paper draws on data from a study intended to compare how two Steiner educators and two public school educators define and deliver moral education. The data reported concern the two Steiner teachers, both in the same school. Data collection involved observations and interviews in two classrooms at a Steiner school – one a high school human biology class, the other a fourth grade class – and attendance at special school events such as the Christmas Faire and evening meetings for parents. The study, which is placed in a useful discussion of the anthroposophical approach to education, highlights how the teachers work within the Steiner curriculum framework and adapt within that (p10/11), use experiential learning and story, verses, crafts and songs, instead of relying primarily on intellectual discussion (p11), shape the curriculum to the developing needs of students (according to Steiner's developmental model) (p12/13), teach themes over a number of weeks to avoid fragmentation of the curriculum (p14), and teach about heroes and 'great people' (p12, 14).

The paper also highlights two aspects of teachers' work as Steiner educators:

- their "inner work" (p17) in which teachers consciously reflect upon who they are as human beings. It is distinctive from reflection amongst mainstream teachers because "it is deliberate, is founded upon anthroposophical literature and study groups, and is a shared topic of discussion among teachers" (p17).
- their "outer work", which "consists of an artistic approach that rests upon self-knowledge in light of Anthroposophy, Steiner's curricular guidelines, and students' developmental needs" (p18), as well as everyday interaction with students etc. Artistic activities are aimed at developing children's sense of pleasure in the good, rather than teaching moral precepts or commands (p18/19)

Reflecting on how Steiner schooling compares with mainstream schooling in the public sector, Armon suggests that where public school teachers bring themes into the curriculum, they tend to be material or technical characteristics of a topic, such as Eskimo history or the principles of physics. "It is not common to find curricular topics in which teachers deliberately present students with opportunities to immerse themselves in the manifestations of good and evil, such as appears in the Waldorf fourth grade study of Norse myths, for example, or the Waldorf high school study of the human body as one representation of the microcosm within the macrocosm" (p16)

Acknowledging that the study did not involve time with students so cannot begin to answer the question of what difference Steiner schooling's approach to moral education makes to the children, the paper concludes by suggesting the strengths of the approach:

- In-depth moral education is more likely because of reciprocal interaction of the four dimensions to create a holistic educational structure: anthroposophy, students' needs, the curriculum, and teachers' work (p22).
- The artistic approach to moral education may prepare students to live more sensitive and aware lives (p22).

- The teacher's close interest in the child, in the sense emphasised by Steiner (manifest in regular attention to daily patterns of personal contact, staying with the same class to Class 8 etc.) guides the teacher's moral impulses towards helping that child (p22/23).

Finally, Armon – bearing in mind this point about interest – suggests Steiner teachers would benefit from re-evaluating the more formal whole class teaching they often rely on and consider less formal teaching through small-group teaching (p23).

Paul Byers, Cynthia Dillard, Freda Easton, Mary Henry, Ray McDermott, Ida Oberman, and Bruce Uhrmacher (1996) *Waldorf Education in an Inner-City Public School: The Urban Waldorf School of Milwaukee*. Spring Valley, NY: Parker Courtney Press (for the Waldorf Education Research Institute of North America).
This study evaluates an inner city publicly funded school in the US based on Steiner's pedagogical ideas - the Urban Waldorf School (UWS) of Milwaukee, which opened in 1991. A team of researchers spent a full week (seven days) at the school visiting classrooms, talking to a variety of people in the school, observing meetings, interviewing members of the district's Board of Education, and discussing amongst themselves what they were seeing and hearing. The team reached the following conclusions (p3/4):

- "Despite the difficult life that surrounds UWS and many of its children, life inside the school is safe, quiet, well ordered, and relationally warm."
- "There is little aggression, and misbehaviour is reasonably and consistently negotiated." (This included negotiation of difficult issues by children on their own.)
- "The school is unusually pleasing, primarily because it is filled with the results of a strong arts programme".
- "In the classrooms we visited, it is generally possible for a child to learn a great deal – and there is only a little reason to think this is less true of the classrooms we did not visit."
- The school, overall, is a place where teachers can teach."
- The school has string leadership and "a good esprit de corps". On the third grade reading test used by Milwaukee to compare school achievement, "UWS has gone from having 26% of the children over grade level in 1992 to 63% over grade level in 1995".
- "The school offers children a path through life as both standard cognitive learners and potential citizens with character."

Maureen V Cox and Anna Rolands (2000) The Effect of Three Different Educational Approaches on Children's Drawing Ability: Steiner, Montessori and Traditional, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70, 485-503.
The study reported in this article set out to compare the drawing ability in three drawing tasks of children in Steiner, Montessori and traditional schools. Sixty children – 20 each from a Steiner, Montessori and (private) traditional school – were tested. Each child completed three drawings: a free drawing, a scene and an observational drawing. Children were between the age of 5 and 7 and were matched for intellectual ability. Scores, given by two raters who assessed each picture, were subject to rigorous statistical analysis.

Steiner school children were generally rated more highly. In particular, their pictures scored better in free and scene drawings, use of colour, using the whole page and organising their drawings into a scene, providing detail and observational drawing. Steiner children also used more fantasy projects. Cox and Rolands conclude that the results suggest "that the approach to art education in Steiner schools is conducive not only to more highly rated imaginative drawings in terms of general drawing ability and use of colour but also to more accurate and detailed observational drawings" (p485). They also caution that the results may not be influenced solely

by Steiner education but it may be that creatively-minded parents who "produce and nourish artistic creativity in their children" may be more inclined to choose Steiner schools (p501). Data and analysis are very robust and clearly explained.

Freda Easton (1997) Educating the Whole Child, 'head, heart and hands': Learning from the Waldorf experience, *Theory into Practice*, 36 (2): 87-95.

This paper does not report a study as such. It (a) identifies 6 key elements of Waldorf education; (b) describes experience of Urban Waldorf School of Milwaukee, based on its evaluation by a research team (reviewed above – see Byers et al 1996); (c) discusses what the author believes can be learnt from Waldorf schools; and (d) concludes with personal statement. A small part of the article at the beginning directly draws from the author's unpublished doctoral dissertation and refers to interviews with more than 50 students (grades 7-12) in 3 schools which were part of this doctoral research. Students interviewed spoke of the school as a caring community, recognised that artistic work and arts in the curriculum played significant role in process of learning to think holistically, talked about learning to balance the intellectual with the artistic and practical etc. In addition, many had strong social concerns that transcended own self interest. Easton emphasises the potential for Waldorf *inspired* schools in the US public sector, rather than Waldorf schools per se. In particular the paper says:

- we can learn from Waldorf education about the value and meaning of rituals, symbols and ceremony but others need to develop "truly pluralistic non-sectarian symbols, rituals, and ceremonies" (p8)
- Waldorf inspired schools are opening in different cultural settings and can adapt to "a truly pluralistic spirituality" (p8)
- Waldorf is as much a new way of thinking for teachers as it is a method or curriculum
- Confirms from her own research profound recognition of artistic work in continuing growth and renewal of adults as well as children
- By creating "a more alive context for learning" teachers can help children from diverse backgrounds become more enthusiastic about learning (p8)
- Waldorf model demonstrates overall advantages of empowering teachers to set policy and make decisions about teaching etc: the problems are outweighed by the benefits.

It is difficult to assess the validity and generalisability of the findings as insufficient information is given on methodology. Nevertheless, Easton's conclusions appear to be insightful and an important contribution to understanding Waldorf education in relation to mainstream schooling.

Jill Golden (1997) 'Narrative - The use of story in Waldorf education', paper presented at Annual Meeting of AERA, Chicago (reports data from Golden's thesis).

The study from which this paper draws is focused on the links between uses of narrative/story in Waldorf education and the shaping of gender identity. The paper discusses use of story in Waldorf education, especially in lower school (grades 1-7) and is based on the author's research "with one teacher and his class of children over a three year period – from age six to age nine (Class 1 to Class 3)" (p1). No further details of methodology are given. However, it is clear from the paper that Golden both observed classes and talked to individual children about the stories they were told in order to gain their articulated perceptions as data.

Having outlined the story curriculum in the school, Golden observes that the outline "immediately highlights its embeddedness within patriarchy… This of course raises questions about actual classroom practice in relation to the stories, including how the teacher negotiates the problem of gender balance". (p3). Analysis of the use of narrative is approached through three aspects:

- story as part of curriculum
- story as a teaching strategy, to teach content (e.g. maths)

- story as a way to teach values

On the basis of classroom observations, Golden observes how values are woven into story as teaching strategy (p4) and suggests that the male, and male hierarchy, appear as the norm in stories (p4, 6). With regard to the latter, Golden cites the retelling, by a boy and a girl, of a story of 'Miss Equal's Garden' told to them by the teacher. Gender roles are reflected in the children's accounts (the girl identifying with the careful, responsible adult female {Miss Equal} and the boy with the naughty male child – p5/6). In the paper it is suggested that the (2) girls' interpretation of another story (about stealing) shows an emphasis on a 'feminine' way of meditation (p9), whilst two boys' accounts seem to emphasise the excitement of testing the boundaries of behaviour (p9/10). The different responses to the story show an attitude to authority that differs according to gender.

This research provides an interesting and critical slant on the less visible effects of the curriculum. Given that it is a small case study, the claims about what is going on when children of different genders retell and interpret stories bear exploration in further research.

Mary E Henry, School rituals as educational contexts: symbolizing the world, others, and self in Waldorf and college pre schools, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 5 (4): 295-309, 1992.

The aim of this study is to examine school rituals as educational contexts and compare the rituals in two private schools, one a Waldorf, the other an elite preparatory school in the US. Fieldwork was undertaken over a year as participant observer. The approach was ethnographic and research methods comprised observation (including videoing and audio-taping lessons), interviews, and collection of documentation.

Rituals are understood as encoding a particular worldview. Three main dimensions emerged from the study and these provide the structure for comparison:

i. perception of the world
   - in the Waldorf school the daily ritual, predominance of natural materials and curriculum reflect the school's ethos "reinforcing a reverence for nature and a view of knowledge as not a collection of disparate subjects, but interlocking ways of approaching a situation" (p299)
   - in the college prep school, the daily prayer, allegiance to the US flag and curriculum and lesson organisation reflect assumptions of dominant US society (e.g. scientific, abstract thinking and competition) (p301)

ii. relationship to others
   - in the Waldorf school, staff meetings have "a pattern of greetings, verses and prayers, songs, supper, business, closing, and farewells" and expressing a community metaphor rather than rule by time and efficiency; rituals throughout the day repeat a 'circle' metaphor – "No teacher or parent is above any other" (p302)
   - the college prep school has an "elaborate hierarchy of status and responsibility" and, e.g. in staff meetings, leans towards task orientation rather than community and leadership from the top; achievement comprises "structured development toward… academic excellence" (p302)

iii. perception of the individual or 'self'
   - in Waldorf school parent-teaching conferencing (meetings with parents about their child's progress) places emphasis on orally reporting to parents (though written reports are provide), includes art work done by the teacher for the child which conveys "something more than words" (p304), communicates a 'picture' of the child (how they contribute to the group, their artistic, creative development and development of intuitive thinking (p304-5)

- in college prep parent-teaching conferencing is more structured and reports quarterly test results; discussion centres "around individual achievement and the ability to engage in independent learning", techniques for improvement are offered and knowledge is "seen as something to be compartmentalized and objectively assessed" (p305).

Both schools "share an appreciation for education as more than the transmission of knowledge" (p307), though what they understand by community and the shared values which are expressed differ.

Whilst the study does not address directly impact on learning, the findings demonstrate very different conceptions of what educational progress means and suggest how the broad curriculum of the school, which includes all those activities, relationships and cultural messages conveyed outside classroom teaching, affects the social and personal learning of students in a broader sense. The data reported do not, however, provide insights into student or staff perceptions of the rituals or direct evidence of whether and how the learning of the schools' respective students differs.

Richard House, Stress and the Waldorf Teacher Towards Pre-emption through Understanding, *Steiner Education*, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp36-41, 2001.
This reports a very small survey of UK teachers (14 in all) about their perceptions of stress. The findings are presented appropriately providing "impressionistic, suggestive indications of at least some of the concerns of at least some Waldorf teachers…" (p37). The main conclusion is that "there are significant levels of stress in Waldorf schools stemming from difficulties with parental expectations, the collegiate type of management structure, in-school human relations and low pay levels…" (p40).

Robert Hutchingson and June Hutchingson (1993) Waldorf Education as a Program for Gifted Students, *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 16, 4, 400-419.
This study pilots the use of Waldorf methods on gifted children in mainstream schools in Toronto. The methodology is not clearly described but appears to be action research. Mainstream pupils were introduced to a Waldorf curriculum but were not used to working without tests and extrinsic motivation. A year later, however, these pupils had adapted and showed more positive attributes in comparison to a second cohort. The pupils with two years' experience of Waldorf valued learning more, were more involved in it and more able to work without the motivation of external tests.

In addition,

- non-gifted Steiner pupils were found to show characteristics of the creative behaviour of gifted pupils;
- gifted pupils in mainstream schools showed little difference to gifted pupils in Steiner schools on SRBCSS scale of "behavioural characteristics in superior students" (Renzulli et al 1976);
- the sustained relationship with a "main lesson" teacher and a spiral curriculum organised along Steiner principles of extended study rather than 45 minute lessons was said to be beneficial to the pupils..

Although written from within the Waldorf movement and slightly polemical in places, the study provides good data on how mainstream pupils react to Waldorf approaches and is an important account of the challenges met in introducing some Waldorf methods to a programme within a mainstream schooling system.

David Jelinek and Li-Ling Sun (2003) Does Waldorf Offer a Viable Form of Science Education? A Research Monograph, Waldorf Science Education Research Monograph.
The aim of this US study was to investigate the anthroposophical basis of the Waldorf curriculum with particular reference to science education; more specifically, to analyse critically the nature of anthroposophical and mainstream science with a view to reporting on the authenticity of the Waldorf approach in relation to mainstream principles. The research, which took place in Californian and Massachusetts Waldorf schools, was conducted through literature review, surveys and interviews, and videotaped classroom observations, generating strong and extensive data (both quantitative and qualitative). Over 200 Steiner teachers, categorized as "student", "beginning", "master" and "expert" were surveyed, as well as a small number of representatives from teacher training. Steiner children and public school children were tested in logical reasoning, and a science activity involving magnetism developed by the TIMMS international comparative study was used to compare the practical performance of Steiner and public school children. The pupils' narrative responses to the task was analysed in depth. The theoretical framework is principally psychological, with particular reference to cognitive developmental learning theorists. This is a well designed, carefully executed and thorough empirical academic study. The data are validated in accordance with sound academic scientific practice.

Whilst there are positive findings about Waldorf school education, there are some negative ones too. The study appears to endorse the claim that pupils taught less content and subjected to less examination pressure do better in the long run. Scientific reasoning of Waldorf pupils was superior, and the gains are greatest in the upper schools. The study also endorses Steiner's claim that school education should be of human beings, some of whom might become scientists, rather than of miniature scientists. There is extensive comparison of pedagogical approaches, subject knowledge and resource/presentation in the study. Generally, Waldorf pedagogical approaches came out well, but serious questions were raised about science knowledge content and presentation of Waldorf materials was generally unfavourably reviewed. An important suggestion is that there is too much teacher demonstration in Waldorf education, although this contrasts with the above finding that Waldorf pupils perform better on the TIMMS magnet test (which was given because it was the nearest that could be found to a fair comparison independent of curriculum content).

The study suggests that Steiner education is successful in its aim to educate human beings. The Steiner emphasis on whole to part progression is in concordance with Bruner's views and there is empirical evidence to suggest that Steiner practice is good here, and that such a pedagogy has some justification within cognitive developmentalism. The emphasis on art within science teaching was questioned, and Steiner's links between science, religion and philosophy were seriously questioned for their relevance and accuracy.

The study also finds that parental understanding of Waldorf ranges widely from the completely misconceived and naïve to the committed anthroposophist.

The study provides a significant comparison between the epistemological roots of the curricula. Direct comparisons between mainstream and Waldorf curriculum content are made, and the viability of working out of anthroposophy in science education is considered. Steiner's emphasis on Goethe's scientific world view is a challenge, as is his claim to supersensible knowledge. The paper states "as a first step Waldorf should disregard Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophy as the source of accurate scientific concepts". The study admits that this may be an unlikely hope but also comments on the unwillingness of some Steiner educators to countenance correction of the curriculum in the light of advances in scientific knowledge, or clarification of basic errors. (It

makes the point that mainstream curricula also have errors, but there is no principled objection to the correction of these.)

Brien Masters (1996) An Appraisal of Steinerian Theory and Waldorf Praxis: How do they compare?, PhD thesis, Roehampton Institute.
This study aimed to compare actual practice in UK schools with Steiner's original aims as clarified by the *Konferenzen* and was carried out between 1993 and 1996. (The *Konferenzen* were the pedagogical meetings Steiner held with the first Waldorf teachers.) The methodology is described as a "reflexive journey" and included document analysis, examination of Steiner's writing and archives, biographical reflection and conversations with key informants. The thesis contains an appendix which is a detailed record of the author's itinerary during the research. Most of the detailed work in schools seems to have been abroad – Israel, Switzerland, Poland for example. The author has held fairly extensive conversations with English practitioners.

The central thrust of the work is an analysis of the *Konferenzen*, -the pedagogical meetings Steiner held with the teachers at the original Waldorf school. The first aim is to interrogate the degree to which contemporary Steiner schools are faithful to Steiner's principles as clarified in a practical sense through the *Konferenzen.* In so doing, constant comparisons are made to the way Steiner and maintained schools address the issues and challenges that arise through the anglicanization of Waldorf and the need for Waldorf to adapt to new social and technical developments. These comparisons, however, are incidental to the main aim which is very much within Waldorf.

The study is a significant work of major scholarship and needs to be recognized as a definitive reference source for Waldorf education. The thesis is a rich source document for Waldorf curriculum and pedagogy, and the organisation of schools. The appendices are extensive and aim to document practice for readers relatively unfamiliar with Waldorf. They do this very successfully.

It is difficult to summarise any particular findings. The value of teachers' pedagogical discourse and revisiting Steiner's aims as elaborated and tested through the *Konferenzen* is highlighted. The shortcomings of current Steiner teachers in relation to the original aims are also highlighted. The thesis concludes with specific recommendations for achieving Waldorf aims in the light of this. Conceivably, the many issues covered can be considered in the light of contemporary practice in maintained schools.

Alduino Mazzone, Waldorf Teacher Education: the implications for teacher education of Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy and its practice in Waldorf schools, PhD thesis, Adelaide University, 1999.

The study by Mazzone investigated the training of Waldorf teachers through a review of Steiner's works and an empirical tour of training centres in Australia, Europe and the US. This was to provide the basis for recommendations about how training of Waldorf teachers can be improved to meet the needs of all children in contemporary Australia. Research methods comprised documentary analysis of Steiner's writings, a survey (involving a lengthy questionnaire given to teacher trainers), and a researcher diary/log of attendance at numerous conferences and events. The survey found that 88% of Australian Waldorf teachers are also state trained. Waldorf trainers were ambivalent about growth of university based courses. Some value was seen in raising the profile of Waldorf and acting as a critical guard against dogmatism. Some trainers saw possible merit in introductory courses that would lead to adoption of some Waldorf practices in mainstream schools. 64% of respondents stressed increased training in arts as the most

significant need in bridging Waldorf/mainstream education. 54% felt anthroposophy essential. 62% felt changes in childhood were a major difficulty – children have changed rapidly since Steiner, ICT etc. School organisation was also felt to be a big challenge. 78% felt that the collegial system and inefficient management practices led to teacher stress and burn out. The study findings are fairly robust. Quantitative data are presented in percentages, without statistical analysis, supported by qualitative comments.

Ray McDermott et al (1996) Waldorf Education in an Inner-city Public School, *Urban Review*, Vol 28, No 2, 119-140.
This reports an ethnographic study of a Waldorf inspired publicly funded inner-city school in Milwaukee, US, which involved detailed and comprehensive emersion in school life (also reported in Byers et al. 1996). It comprises quite a thorough investigation involving an extensive range of meetings with a wide range of informants within and beyond the school. There is significant triangulation and testing of data interpretation by a strong team of academics who met to review the project a year later. There are possible comparisons with difficult urban environments in England, but the specific racial and economic circumstances of American inner-city may limit generalisability.

The research found that Black (African American) pupils in a deprived inner city environment taught in the school scored above grade level in reading. Beneficial practices highlighted by the study include the method of caring for the children, methods of reducing time spent on disciplinary problems in a challenging inner-city environment and how confrontation was handled.

One of the many interesting aspects of the school studied is that it was staffed by mainstream, state certified teachers who subsequently completed a master's qualification in Waldorf. The paper also reports disagreement between Waldorf fundamentalists and those favouring adapting philosophy to new circumstances.

The paper draws attention to the latent possibility of racism, linking it to "a naïve version of the evolution of consciousness… which sometimes places one race below another on an evolutionary scale" (according to Steiner's version of evolution) (See also McDermott 1996).

David W Nicholson (2000) Layers of Experience: Forms of representation in a Waldorf school classroom, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 32 (4): 575-587.
This paper reports a study which aimed to enhance ongoing study of forms of representation by looking at practice in a Waldorf class. The investigation is a case study of a US Waldorf school involving lesson observation, review of school documentation and pupils' work, and pre- and post-observation interviews of teacher. Little use of textbooks or other teaching aids was found. The teacher uses detailed knowledge of pupils gained from teaching them continuously for six years. Notes, essays, tests, worksheets etc. are not used. Pupils' work consists of expository and creative writing such as reports, stories and poems. Artwork is significant. Multiple forms of representation in main lesson: visual arts, recitation, story-telling, singing, music, creative writing and physical movement.

Ida Oberman (1997) Waldorf History: Case Study of Institutional Memory, Paper presented at AERA, Chicago, March.
The paper tries to account for the continuity and sustained identity of Waldorf education, i.e. the fact that as it has grown worldwide it has retained its institutional identity. The secret of its

successful continuity lies in its "semiotic supports: its symbols, motifs and rituals" (p1). In the paper, the author aims to "trace the institution remembering itself" through its "representational images" (p1) and provide "a semiotic mapping of the movement" (p3). Because the paper does not research Waldorf school education as such it has not been reviewed fully.

Earl J Ogletree, International Survey of the Status of Waldorf Schools, 1998 (198 pages) (source: ERIC {Educational Resources Information Center}, University of Illinois, US).
The aim of this international study was to determine whether Waldorf principles and Steiner's indications were being followed and implemented. Specifically, the study's purpose was to "gain insight into how the schools are functioning and what Waldorf faculty and personnel think and feel about Waldorf education, etc. This includes an examination of the teaching practices, curricula and outcomes as well as the positive aspects and some of the problems as perceived by those working in the schools" (p2). A survey of 520 Steiner schools in 31 countries was undertaken, yielding responses from 234 schools (45%). Questionnaires were completed in most cases by a teacher at the school. The resultant data are not analysed by Ogletree nor commented on, but are set out over the almost 200 pages of the report for the whole survey and for 19 individual countries or continents. The raw data need to be examined and analysed by the reader in order to draw conclusions. This will be done as far as possible within the confines of our study and the data used to inform our work. The data appear robust, bearing in mind the response rate (which is, nevertheless, a respectable figure for such an ambitious survey).

Interesting findings (for the survey as a whole) include:

- 47% were of the view that it was not necessary to be an anthroposophist to be an effective teacher (p13)
- 92% indicated that their school teaches through main lessons (p15)
- 63% described their school's working/teaching climate as democratic (p15)
- 87% considered that Waldorf education is compatible with the times and only 9% thought it too traditional (p18)
- 91% were of the view that Waldorf education develops 'free thinking' individuals (p21)
- 70% agreed that Steiner education subtly influenced or predisposed students to be open to the spiritual world and anthroposophy (p22)
- 28% indicated that Waldorf school practices have been adopted by public/state schools (p22)
- "tuitions" (fees) was the source of school income most often ranked as most important (p26)

Earl J Ogletree, Creative Thinking Development of Waldorf School Students: A Study, Trans intelligence magazine, No 7, 2000.
This study sets out to compare creative thinking development of Steiner school and public school students in three countries - England, Scotland, and Germany. The research involved 1,165 third to sixth grade students drawn from a total of six Steiner and six state schools. Students were matched on the basis of their socio-economic status. The sample of students was administered the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking Ability. There was also a qualitative comparative examination of randomly sampled drawings. Statistical tests were applied to the test scores. Statistical tests were applied to the test scores.

The study found that generally Steiner school students obtained significantly higher creativity scores than their state school peers. An exception was that English Steiner students did not display higher verbal fluency, flexibility and originality than their state school counterparts (though they did with regard to drawing). Ogletree concludes that the "reason for this discrepancy is that English primary schools had a reputation for being progressive and innovative and not as

traditional as their Scottish and German counterparts" (p5). The data are robust and analysis appears thorough.

A qualitative assessment of drawings found those by Steiner students superior – "more mature in terms of skill and technique – blending, balance and selection of colour" (p6). One of the differences is the completeness of drawings, leaving no empty spaces.

Kim John Payne, Bonnie River-Bento and Anne Skillings (2002) Initial Report of the Waldorf ADHD Research Project, *Research Bulletin*, 7 (1): 32-33.
Kim Payne, Arthur Zajonc and Martha Hadley (undated) The Waldorf Approach to Attention Related Disorders: A creative way to understand and help children with difficult behavior [no reference details].
The second of these articles is a research proposal and plan, which largely comprises a review of the issues and research/expert commentary. The first reports initial findings of a study which is described as addressing the question of how we can "stand against the huge wave that was hitting families and schools that called for the drugging of children with such substances as Ritalin", in relation to attention related disorders. The study was an action research project in which an Intervention Pack for teachers and parents, detailing changes to be made in home and school life, was sent to 55 families, 23 teachers and 9 anthroposophic doctors. All of the children involved were diagnosed ADD/ADHD . Parents and teachers completed monthly log of changes they made for four months.

Although not directly researching Waldorf schools, the findings do add to the research evidence about Steiner education, in as much as the changes recommended by the Intervention Pack (in diet, media, organisational structure, exercise, behaviour strategies, environmental modifications, social skills training etc.) are "intrinsic to Waldorf education practice and school and home ethos". Effects of the Pack could therefore be inferred as saying something about Steiner schooling.

As a result of the Intervention Pack, children at school were found to have improvements academically and behaviourally, in general motor and social abilities, and in stress reactions/calmness. Overall, 68.5% of children had some statistically and clinically significant improvements in behaviour, described by the authors as "very large positive shifts in behaviour".

The article is short and insufficient details of methodology and findings are given to assess their validity and generalisability.

Ian Rivers and Alison Soutter (1996) Bullying and the Steiner School Ethos, *School Psychology International*, Vol 17, 359-377.
The aim of this case study was to investigate levels of bullying in Steiner schools and test hypothesis that there will be less bullying because of Steiner ethos. Pupils were interviewed in Classes 6 , 8 and 10, using Olweus bullying inventory. Some teachers also volunteered to be interviewed.

The study claims that there are lower levels of bullying in Steiner schools, although provision of comparable data for mainstream schools is weak. Implicitly it suggests that Steiner pupils learn better because there are relatively low levels of harassment and good relationships. The curriculum and pedagogy emphasise an integration of morality and values with cognitive tasks. The study highlights the integration of moral learning, the real life contextualisation of learning and the effectiveness of the school ethos and teacher/pupil relationships. It is claimed that the

Steiner approach is more integrated, particularly the approach to PSHE, by comparison with mainstream schooling.

The data are fairly robust. The weakness is lack of comparable data for maintained schools.

Alison Soutter and Ian Rivers (undated) Teasing: A Case Study Approach with Methodological Implications, unpublished paper, Department of Psychology, University of Luton.

This study reports a case study investigating teasing following the findings of an earlier study on bullying. The methodology comprises detailed interviews of four pupils, supported by observation and informal diary. The Olweus bullying inventory is used. There is limited analysis and no quantitative data. The study confirms findings in the earlier paper, that physical bullying is very rarely observed in Steiner schools, although there can be "teasing". It reinforces indications in that previous study that integration of learning with moral thinking and feeling may contribute to the Steiner class as a cohesive group. There is evidence in this study that a class "looks after its own" even when they are unpopular and teased within the class. The implication is that maintained schools might reduce bullying through adopting Steiner principles of class teacher and integration of moral teaching. The data are moderately valid. The term "teasing" is ambiguously defined and a clearer distinction between malicious verbal bullying, "teasing" and banter would be helpful.

Jennifer Schieffer and RT Busse (2001) Low SES Minority Fourth-graders' achievement, *Research Bulletin*, 6 (1).

The aim of this US study was to further examine the effects of the positive educational experience for disadvantaged ("at risk") students in public schools found by qualitative research. The hypothesis investigated was "that the children educated in the Waldorf model would evidence higher academic achievement than their peers who were educated in a more traditional environment and that the increased achievement would be consistent across cohorts". The study is described a "between-groups, ex post facto quasi-experimental design", and the data are subjected to detailed statistical analysis.

Fourth grade economically disadvantaged minority students who took statewide achievement tests during 1997-98 and 1998-99 from a public Waldorf school and a neighbouring public school were compared. For 1997-98, 35/36 low SES Waldorf students were compared with 9 in the comparison school; for 1998-99, 24 were compared with 41/42 students. Details are given of the test which is designed to measure pupil attainment of knowledge and concepts in maths, reading, social studies, science and language arts (including writing). The paper concludes that there is "a consistent over the two years under study that indicates the public Waldorf school provided greater success for the minority, low SES fourth graders".

The authors appropriately sound a caution about interpretation of the data due to the "extremely small sample size" for the comparison school. They also draw attention to other weaknesses of the study:

- no validity data were available on the test used
- the pupils at the Waldorf may have had higher aptitudes in general which would make the results attributable to intrinsic abilities of the pupils
- although the two schools differed in pedagogy, the data do not specify type of education children received at the comparison school.

Bearing these points in mind, the findings do support the hypothesis. Further research would be necessary to establish the generalisability of the findings. The importance of the study is that it is

a rare attempt to measure and compare the impact of Waldorf education through quantitative research.

Patti Smith, Update: essentials of Waldorf Education Study, *Research Bulletin*, Vol 3, No 1, 1998.

The study reported briefly in this article is a pilot survey carried out as a preliminary to a more in-depth study with the aim of determining "primary elements of Waldorf education that would be investigated more thoroughly in the next phase". The survey sought the views and perceptions of individuals involved in Waldorf or Waldorf-inspired education in the US and Canada. A total of 250 questionnaires were sent to schools, training centres, colleges and conference participants, and 150 were returned.

Amongst its findings were perceptions of the achievements of Steiner education:

- two-thirds viewed it as successfully enabling students to develop a strong sense of self and good life skills
- two-thirds viewed it as successfully preparing students for meaningful work
- half viewed it as successfully preparing students for college admission.

The main reasons given for Waldorf education succeeding in its aims were:

- the image of the child (two-thirds)
- the theory of child development (two-thirds)
- teacher self-development (two-thirds)

School governance practices attracted lowest agreement as a reason.

Asked about outcomes, respondents replied as follows:

- almost all (95%) agreed that Waldorf education develops a students' artistic abilities and appreciation of nature
- 90% that it develops students' imagination, intuitive abilities and a strong sense of self
- 80% that students develop strong academic and intellectual skills
- 65% that it encourages students to develop spiritual consciousness, an appreciation of cultural diversity and a sense of service to the school community
- less than half that it encourages students to develop a sense of responsibility to the wider community.

The article is short (two pages) and does not give any detail about the questionnaire or the representativeness or pattern of responses. It did not prove possible to obtain further details of the study, though efforts were made to so this. It is difficult, therefore, to assess the robustness of the data.

Tom Stehlik (2003a) Parenting as a Vocation: Lifelong learning can begin in the home, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 22 (4): 367-379, 2003.

Tom Stehlik (2003b) Each Parent Carries the Flame: Waldorf schools as sites for promoting lifelong learning, creating community and educating for social renewal, Flaxton, Queensland: Postpressed, 2003.

Both these publications report the same study, the book providing the more detailed account of its methodology and findings, and being the basis for the review. Its focus is adult learning in the context of a Steiner school. The research question addressed is: "To what extent is Mt Baker Waldorf School a learning community for adults, and in what ways does such a community encourage and facilitate lifelong learning for adults involved with the school, particularly parents?". The investigation comprises a case study of the community of Mt Baker Waldorf School, especially the parents (p12). Narrative is central to the study, both in terms of the voices of community members and the process of researcher documentation and interpretation (p13),

and a variety of data collection methods are used. The study's summary conclusions (p176-177) are that:

- the school is "an intentional learning community" which offers opportunities for all community members to engage in learning, a process which Stehlik describes as "awakening the will"
- choosing Steiner schooling is linked to the idea of "destiny learning" – the learning opportunities that life presents to the individual
- parenting can be seen as a vocation: "By the same analogy, the curriculum of the home environment is just as important as that of the classroom, especially if the family is viewed as the basic unit of socialisation and a site for social renewal."
- the school provides a "community of practice" where practice includes spiritual development – a form of "practical spirituality"
- many of the learning situations are informal and incidental, and some include "transformative learning". Challenge to beliefs can be profound prompting some to leave the community or engage with it only at superficial level
- the school is more than a site for schooling; it is for building community, adult learning, social development etc.

The importance of the study is that it is empirical work that demonstrates the wider educational and social aims of Steiner schools and that Steiner schooling is meant to be an integral part of a broad community of people who are themselves engaged in spiritual learning and development.

P. Bruce Uhrmacher (1993a) Coming to Know the World Through Waldorf Education, *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 9 (1): 87-104.

The aim of this study is to describe, interpret and appraise the 'ecological' character of two Waldorf schools to shed new light on Waldorf education and on educational matters in general. Four main questions are addressed:

1. What are Waldorf educators' general intentions?
2. What actually happens in such schools?
3. What is the educational significance of the theories and practices as exemplified in the two schools studied?
4. What do these theories and practices mean for students of Waldorf schools, and what could they mean for students in public schools?

The methodological approach is described as educational connoisseurship and critique (following Eisner), which renders a vivid description, interpretation and evaluation of school and classroom life, using narrative and ideas, models, theories from the arts, humanities or social sciences. The research involved observation of events, meetings, festivals and four classrooms (2nd and 5th grades in one school, 3rd and 4th in the other) (in all 280 hours of observation), and interviews with teachers, student teachers, administrators and "a few parents" (in all, 40 interviews). One school was urban, the other rural. In both schools, students were mainly white and middle class.

The study found six types of conditions that teachers provide for students:
technical, aesthetic, social, sensitive, symbolic and focal (p91). The bulk of the paper concentrates on elaborating the technical (transfer of knowledge using image, rhythm, movement and story telling) and the aesthetic (important in itself). Through this, Uhrmacher highlights aspects of Waldorf pedagogy from which mainstream education might learn and draws attention to conceptual and practical overlaps as well – for example:

- importance of image in Steiner and in other education theories/practices, e.g. Dewey, and the concept of 'curriculum thread' (p94/95)

- importance of rhythm in Steiner and in Whitehead (p95/96) (This could also be linked with Piaget in so far as he argues students need time to assimilate and accommodate - p96/97.)
- importance of learning from whole body in Steiner and in Merleau-Ponty and Grumet (p98)
- importance of story telling in Steiner and in Egan (p98)

Impact on learning is not validated by assessments of students or their work: a teacher claimed the rhythm approach succeeded in maths (p96). Uhrmacher comments that "The Waldorf students I observed *seemed* to enjoy these activities, and that is important in itself" (p98; emphasis added). However, discussion is supported by illustrations from the case studies. These empirical illustrations plausibly support the arguments of the article, which provides an insightful and informed analysis of aspects of Steiner pedagogy and what this may mean for mainstream educators. Questions that mainstream educators can pose to themselves are identified (p100, 104).

Bruce Uhrmacher (1993b) Making Contact: An exploration of focused attention between teacher and students, *Curriculum Inquiry*, 23 (4), 433-444.
This article reports aspect of study reported in other 1993 article of Uhrmacher which has been reviewed ('Coming to Know the World Through Waldorf Education'). In this article Uhrmacher says that the intention is "to discuss a particular kind of educational activity that I observed in my study of Waldorf schools" (p435). The methodology is summarised in the review above. In the manner of grounded theory, "an abstraction to account for a variety of activities that I saw in various grades" is created (p437).

The study does not directly investigate learning, but an inference is drawn that the educational activities observed (labelled 'focal activities') have the potential to enhance learning and the educational value of schooling: "Understanding activities designed to create contact with students will not cure our nation's ills or help us to become number one in math or science. Recognizing and heeding focal activities, however, may help a child enjoy school, feel valued, or be prepared to learn something new, and these are not bad things for which to strive." (p442)

Focal activities, sometimes called focal conditions in the article (p437), describe "a number of activities… conducted by every teacher I observed that seemed to establish contact between teacher and students in interesting ways." (p436). They are "those times when teachers establish, confirm, or discontinue contact between themselves and students" (p437). Focal activities:
- routinise contact
- can be used diagnostically
- personalise teacher-student contacts and the classroom
- create classroom moods
- have pedagogical implications (e.g. preparing pupils for forthcoming content)
- re-establish and confirm contact.

Discussion is supported by illustrations from the case studies, which plausibly support the arguments of the article. The analysis shows commonalities that exist and which may potentially be developed (by adopting focal activities) with mainstream education.

Gay Ward (2001) Education for the Human Journey: personal narrative in the primary classroom, paper presented at Australian Association for Research in Education International Conference, Freemantle, 2-6 December 2001.
This study aimed to explore use of narrative to foster meaning-making in primary classrooms. It is a comparative study, drawing on detailed qualitative data from teachers in Steiner, Montessori,

Government and Catholic schools. It found that Steiner schools pay much more attention to rhythm and ritual and are less competitive, and that Steiner teachers integrated movement, poetry and music into classroom routines more than any of the other teachers observed. It confirmed that Steiner teachers are effective story tellers and the oral tradition is stronger. The paper touches on the level of personal commitment Steiner teachers have to their pupils and on the level of teacher collegiality, with state school and Catholic teachers relatively more isolated. The Steiner teachers observed practise the documented Steiner principles of curriculum and pedagogy.

Glenys Woods, Maggie O'Neill and Philip A Woods (1997) Spiritual Values in Education: Lessons from Steiner?, *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 2 (2): 25-40.
This paper undertakes what is described as an exploratory consideration of Steiner education to see what light such an examination might throw upon and contribute to policy debates on spiritual education. It seeks through this to further dialogue between Steiner education and mainstream approaches to schooling in the UK, and considers possible research directions and policy strategies. The paper draws on semi-structured interviews with four teachers from one Steiner school in England, as well as citing interviews with senior teachers in state schools for illustrative purposes in the discussion. Amongst the themes highlighted in the discussion are the relative constancy and specificity of the foundations of Steiner education compared with state education's tendency to be imbued with continual change and its broader notions of spiritual development. Attention is drawn to shared perspectives between Steiner and mainstream education, such as the "strong theme in British education emphasising the importance of teaching the whole child and the role of the school in personal and social development" (p33) and the recognition within mainstream education of the importance of self-reflection by teachers which resonates with the significance of self-development in Steiner schools. One of the Steiner teachers who had also worked in the state sector spoke of state teachers whom she felt showed devotion, love and interest which, as she put it, "can lead to spiritual intuition" (p33). The paper suggests that there are different policy orientations which Steiner education may choose to follow: replication (reproduction of the original model school) or influence (Steiner education acting as "stimulation for mainstream schooling and as a resource of ideas and practices that might be used and adapted in state schools" {p36}); and constancy (holding to the original texts of the founder) or adaptation (being responsive to new developments and different cultures).

APPENDIX 4

SURVEY SCHEDULE

University of the West of England, Bristol

SURVEY SCHEDULE
STEINER SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND RESEARCH PROJECT
2004

CONTENTS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

APPENDICES

SECTION 1: CURRICULUM PROVISION

1. (a) Here is a summary (Appendix A) of the Steiner curriculum.
Does this reflect the curriculum in this school,
or are there variations here? **There are no variations**
There are variations

(b) **If there are variations**, please amend the summary

2. What *subject* lessons are taught to each class and by whom?

Class	Lessons	Teachers
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

3. (a) Does your school address issues concerning social diversity (e.g. cultural, ethnic diversity) in the curriculum?

YES / NO

(b) **If yes**, please tick all that apply:
i. Through topics in main lessons **…..**
ii. Through activities in subject lessons **…..**
iii. Events in the school **…..**
iv. Other, please specify **…..**

_____

4. Pupils in state schools would normally experience a significant increase in homework when they progress to secondary school in Year 7. Would Steiner pupils in the equivalent Class 6 experience a similar change?

YES / NO

5. Which of the following homework tasks would be set for Class 6?
Please tick all that apply:

i. Extension of main lesson,
e.g. *finish a drawing, find something out etc*. **…..**

ii. Formal "head task" in English **…..**

iii. Formal "head task" in Maths **…..**

iv. Other formal work set by class teacher **…..**
(please state subjects)_____

v. Work set by subject teachers **…..**
(please state subjects)_____

vi. Any other **…..**
(please specify)_____

6. How many hours homework per week would be expected of pupils in Class 6? **….. hours**

7. How many nights per week would homework be set for pupils in Class 6? **….. nights**

8. Would there be any significant increases beyond Class 6? **YES / NO**

9. (a) Is homework set for younger classes? **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**, what might be typical?
Please tick all that apply:

i. Learning spellings or tables **…..**

ii. Solving a problem in maths **…..**

iii. Writing a story **…..**

iv. Extension of main lesson
e.g. *finish a drawing, find something out etc* **…..**

v. Occasional tasks *e.g. draw your route to school* **…..**

vi. Any other **…..**
(specify)_____

If there is an upper school, ask Questions 10 to 14:

10. Can you briefly indicate how GCSE and A level teaching is structured?

11. In what ways is this structure different from earlier years?

12. In overall terms, is greater weighting given at 14-19 to the continuing Steiner curriculum or the examination curriculum, or is equal emphasis given to both?

Steiner curriculum **…..**
Examination curriculum **…..**
Equal emphasis to both **…..**

13. (a) Is any of the examination syllabus content taught during main lesson blocks? **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**, what?

14. (a) Are any non-examination subjects taught outside main lesson blocks? **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**, please indicate what and where in the table below:

Class	List any non-examination subjects that are taught outside main lesson
9	
10	
11	
12	

SECTION 2: PEDAGOGY

15. We understand that *whole class work - teacher to pupils* is very important in Steiner pedagogy. Would you agree that this is true? **YES / NO**

16. Which of these other approaches would also be found in your school?

	please circle replies:
i. Teacher works with groups of pupils	**never / occasionally / often / don't know**
ii. Pupils working in co-operative groups	**never / occasionally / often / don't know**
iii. Pupils work individually at set tasks	**never / occasionally / often / don't know**
iv. Other (Please specify)	**never / occasionally / often / don't know**

17. We have identified the following aspects of pedagogy as particularly important in distinguishing Steiner schools from the practices commonly found in state schools. To what extent do you agree that they are *important* distinguishing characteristics of your school?

	please circle replies:
i. A grounding in a view of child development	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**
ii. A developmental emphasis on willing/feeling/thinking	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**
iii. The continuity of a class teacher from class 1 – 8	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**
iv. The combination of "main lesson" with subject lessons	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**
v. The theme of the main lesson is reflected in subject lessons	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**
vi. The artistry of the teacher in bringing lesson content directly to children	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**
vii. Attentiveness to children's spirituality	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**
viii. The role of the narrative	**agree / partly agree / disagree / not sure**

18. Are there any *important* distinguishing characteristics that you would like to add to the list in Q.17?

19. As the children become older, the demands on teachers' subject knowledge become greater. During classes 1-8 in this school, how important are each of the following ways of dealing with this?

	please circle degree of importance:
i. Some subjects being taught by specialists, even in Class 1	**very / quite / little / not important / not done at this school**
ii. Class teachers expected to develop their knowledge as the children grow older	**very / quite / little / not important / not done at this school**
iii. The other teachers being available for support/consultation	**very / quite / little / not important / not done at this school**
iv. A specialist taking a main lesson block	**very / quite / little / not important / not done at this school**
v. Teachers swapping classes to play to their strengths	**very / quite / little / not important / not done at this school**
vi. Other (Please specify)	**very / quite / little / not important / not done at this school**

20. How much do teachers draw on text books, television, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in supporting the fundamental work of the teacher in bringing knowledge to the children?

a. Text Books

please circle replies:

i. for class 1 to 8 teachers	**ii. for upper school subject teachers**
A lot	**A lot**
A little	**A little**
Not at all	**Not at all**
Don't know	**Don't know**

b. TV/Video

i. for class 1 to 8 teachers	**ii. for upper school subject teachers**
A lot	**A lot**
A little	**A little**
Not at all	**Not at all**
Don't know	**Don't know**

c. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

i. for class 1 to 8 teachers	**ii. for upper school subject teachers**
A lot	**A lot**
A little	**A little**
Not at all	**Not at all**
Don't know	**Don't know**

21. We understand that a very wide range of props and resources would be used in lessons. There is no need to mention all of these, but are there any you would single out as *particularly important to your methods and which might be found less or not at all in state schools*?

22. Can you list the features of a main lesson that would give it shape and rhythm (e.g. use of verse, music, physical activity etc.)?

23. How do teachers in their pedagogy take account of pupils' different abilities?
Please tick all that apply:

i. Additional support for tasks,
e.g. *extra adult help, more teacher time* **…..**
ii. Additional resources or aids **…..**
iii. Differentiated tasks **…..**
iv. Additional tasks **…..**
v. Extension tasks **…..**
vi. Enrichment tasks **…..**
vii. Tasks geared to specific learning styles e.g. *visual, kinaesthetic etc* **…..**

24. To what degree might any of the following result in a teacher altering his or her planned lesson content?

	please circle replies:
i. Feedback from assessment that indicates misunderstandings	**often / sometimes / never**
ii. Feedback from child study that indicates pupils are not relating to lesson content	**often / sometimes / never**
iii. Other (Please specify)	**often / sometimes / never**

25. Have children changed since the time when Rudolf Steiner was writing about education?

Not at all
In some ways, though not in fundamental essentials
Considerably

26. Is Steiner's explanation of child development still valid?

Totally
In its important fundamentals
Increasingly less so

27. Is the Teachers' meeting aware of developments in the maintained system, such as the ones listed below?

Please tick all that apply:

i. Foundation Stage **…..**
ii. National Literacy Strategy **…..**
iii. National Numeracy Strategy **…..**
iv. Key Stage 3 Strategy **…..**
v. Thinking Skills/Cognitive Acceleration **…..**
vi. Multiple Intelligence/differentiated learning styles **…..**
vii. Emotional Intelligence **…..**
viii. Citizenship and PSHE education **…..**
ix. School Councils **…..**
x. Sustainable Development Education **…..**
xi. Study Support **…..**
xii. Extended schools **…..**
xiii. ICT in schools **…..**

28. (a) If aware, have or would the Teachers' Meeting consider the appropriateness of developments for assimilation into Steiner pedagogy?

YES / NO / PERHAPS (i.e. might be open to considering their appropriateness)

(b) **If yes or perhaps**, please state which:

29. (a) Where, if they arise at all, are problems in pupils' acceptance of the teacher as an authority figure most likely to occur?

Circle all that apply for class teacher: **Class**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

(b) For subject teachers, would there ever be problems in accepting the teacher as an authority on his or her subject? **YES / NO**

(c) **If yes**, in which classes would this be most likely?

Circle all that apply for subject teacher **Class**

6 7 8 9 10 11 12

(d) Please elaborate briefly and indicate how such problems are dealt with.

30. Approximately how often does the challenge of *particularly disruptive pupils* arise in classes in this school?

	please circle replies:
i. When the **class teacher** is teaching	**never / occasionally / sometimes / often / don't know**
ii. When **a subject teacher** is teaching	**never / occasionally / sometimes / often / don't know**

31. What steps would be taken to deal with a *particularly disruptive pupils*?

Please tick all that apply:

i. Raise the matter at a teachers' meeting **…..**
ii. Examine why this behaviour is occurring **…..**
iii. Talk to the parents **…..**
iv. Meditative picturing of the child concerned **…..**
v. Apply appropriate punishment **…..**
vi. Talk to the child **…..**
vii. Other (specify)
viii. Reformulate lesson content and/or emphasis **…..**
ix. Other **…..**
(specify)_____

32. Approximately how often does the challenge of *an unruly class* arise in this school?

	please circle replies:
i. When the **class teacher** is teaching	**never / occasionally / sometimes / often / don't know**
ii. When **a subject teacher** is teaching	**never / occasionally / sometimes / often / don't know**

33. What steps would be taken to deal with *an unruly class*?

Please tick all that apply:

i. Raise the matter at a teachers' meeting **…..**
ii. Examine why this behaviour is occurring **…..**
iii. Talk to the parents **…..**
iv. Meditative picturing of the children concerned **…..**
v. Apply whole-class punishment **…..**
vi. Talk to the children **…..**
vii. Hand over responsibility of class to a different teacher **…..**
viii. Supplement teaching of class with different teachers (e.g. subject teachers) **…..**
ix. Reconsider own approach and relationship to child **…..**
x. Ask for advisory or mentoring assistance **…..**
xi. Other **…..**
(specify)_____

SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT

34. (a) Is there a school policy on assessment? **YES (in written form)** **YES (in non-written form)** **NO**

(b) **If there is a written policy**, can we have a copy? **YES / NO**

35. (a) Are there any assessment procedures which are common across the school? **YES / NO**
(e.g. assessment of all Class 2 pupils by special needs teacher; annual school report)

(b) **If yes**, what are they? Please outline.

36. Generally, how do teachers in this school assess pupils' progress?

please circle replies:

(a) On-going observations (daily/weekly) including:	**yes / no**
i. attendance/punctuality?	**yes / no**
ii. completion of work?	**yes / no**
iii. grades given?	**yes / no**
iv. behaviour?	**yes / no**
v. unusual events (e.g. serious misdemeanour, family crisis, illness/injury)?	**yes / no**
vi. participation in lessons?	**yes / no**
(b) Regular monitoring of progress in:	**yes / no**
i. literacy	**yes / no**
ii. numeracy	**yes / no**
iii. co-ordination skills	**yes / no**
vi. social skills	**yes / no**
(c) Child studies (of children who need special consideration, because of learning/behavioural difficulties, special qualities, etc.)	**yes / no**
(d) Class studies (review of whole class in terms of an aspect of attainment or social dynamics)	**yes / no**
(e) Student profiles (age 14-19) at the end of main-lesson blocks for each arts/crafts/life skills course and termly for on-going subjects) Including:	**yes / no**
i. behaviour and motivation	**yes / no**
ii. subject-specific attainments	**yes / no**
(f) Other If yes, please specify	**yes / no**

37. (a) Do you have learning support staff at your school? **YES / NO**
(b) **If yes**, do they assist in assessment procedures? **YES / NO**

38. Is pupil progress (comparing past and present learning in relation to goals of Steiner school teaching for that age) a topic for Teachers' Meetings? **YES / NO**

39. (a) Are there child study sessions **YES / NO**
(b) **If yes**, and do you find these to be effective? **YES / NO**

40. Does the school doctor assist with individual pedagogical assessment? **YES / NO**

41. What would you see as the main role of assessment?
Please tick all that apply:
i. to support future learning **…..**
ii. to measure pupil progress by comparing present or past learning with any benchmarks or expectations that exist in Steiner education **…..**
iii. to assess whether healthy development for that individual child is taking place **…..**
iv. to assess whether the needs of the child are being met **…..**
v. other **…..**
(please specify)_____

42. Is any use ever made of published tests, such as NFER, to help with the diagnosis of pupils' learning needs? **YES / NO / Don't know**

43. What sorts of records does the school keep in the pupil's file?
Please tick all that apply:
i. examples of work (annotated) **…..**
ii. examples of work (not annotated) **…..**
iii. records of behaviour **…..**
iv. records of temperament **…..**
v. records of physical development **…..**
vi. records of events such as a particular achievement or a serious misdemeanour **…..**
vii. summary of any child study done in the teachers' meetings **…..**
viii. school doctor's reports **…..**
ix. learning support (formative assessment) reports **…..**
x. notes on disciplinary situations and outcomes and reviews **…..**
xi. pastoral care reports **…..**
xii. copies of termly, annual reports, student profiles **…..**
xiii. documentation from previous schools **…..**

44. To what degree are pupils involved in assessing or evaluating their own learning?

please circle replies:

	Class 1 -5	**Class 6 and above**
(a) Pupils select work to go in a portfolio	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(b) Pupils evaluate their own work, identifying what they did well/didn't understand	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(c) Pupils negotiate targets with teacher	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(d) Pupils peer mark work	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(e) Pupils post queries about work to teacher	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(f) Pupils invited to make comments in home/school diary	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(g) Pupils invited to feed back general reflections on their experience in the school	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(h) Pupils encouraged to express comments and questions informally	**yes / no**	**yes / no**
(i) Other If yes, please specify	**yes / no**	**yes / no**

45. Are written reports give to parents/carers? **YES / NO**

If yes, ask Questions 46 to 48:

46. How often are written reports give to parents/carers?

every term / half yearly / annually

other (please specify) _____

47. What do these contain?

please circle replies:

(a) Class teacher's characterisation of the whole child	**yes / no**
(b) Evaluation of pupil's progress including:	**yes / no**
i. child's participation (attention span, co-operation and response)	**yes / no**
ii. progress and ability in subjects	**yes / no**
iii. age-appropriate ability to work independently	**yes / no**
iv. social behaviour	**yes / no**
v. activity (presentation of work, tidiness, completed tasks)	**yes / no**
vi. aesthetic progression	**yes / no**
(c) Summary of curriculum for year	**yes / no**
(d) Record of attainment in all subjects	**yes / no**
(e) For younger children, something which is directed personally towards the child (could be a gift or painting)	**yes / no**
(f) For older children, a student profile for each subject	**yes / no**
(g) For students graduating from the school, a detailed leavers' report (record of achievement)	**yes / no**

48. (a) Are goals for the future indicated in the report? **YES / NO / Don't know**

If yes: (b) What kind of goals?

(c) In what manner are these goals expressed?

(d) How often do the pulpil get such reports?
Is there an element of self evaluation in them? **YES / NO**

(e) Is future assessment based on the achievement of these goals? **YES / NO**

(f) Does the report outline how these goals could be achieved? **YES / NO**

SECTION 4: STEINER SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

49. (a) Can you confirm that the school's educational provision is based entirely on Steiner's educational philosophy and guiding principles? **YES / NO / Don't know**

(b) **If no**, please elaborate.

50. (a) Are there are there other philosophical approaches that influence school practice **YES / NO / Don't know**

(b) **If yes**, what are they?

51. What would you say are the most significant principles from Steiner's lectures and writings that your teachers strive to implement in order to give your school its identity?

52. (a) Are there any key texts, or documents or articles published by the Steiner Fellowship or a similar body that you and your colleagues draw on in guiding a developing practice in your school? **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**no, what are these?

53. Which texts would you recommend to a new teacher?

54. How important is it that teachers and other staff are knowledgeable about anthroposophy?

55. What proportion of staff would call themselves anthroposophists?

56. (a) Is there a collegial study of Steiner educational ideas?. **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**, what proportion of teachers attend this?

(c) At these study meetings, do you feel free to raise issues you do not understand? **YES / NO**

57. Would you be happy for a teacher with little or no knowledge of anthroposophy to work in your school?

please circle replies:

(a) class teacher	**yes / no**
(b) subject teacher full time	**yes / no**
(c) subject teacher part time	**yes / no**

SECTION 5: GOOD PRACTICE

58. We are keen to learn about anything the school is especially proud of. What aspect of Steiner education do you think your school is particularly good at? Is this something you think others might learn from?
(This could be to do with the school's ethos, curriculum and pedagogy, or its collegial form of management.)

Please explain:

59. (a) Has the school or any of its teachers undertaken/been involved with any empirical research into Steiner education?

YES / NO

(b) **If yes**, please give details

60. Does the school collaborate with:

(a) other Steiner school(s)? **YES / NO**
(b) other independent school(s)? **YES / NO**

(c) **If yes to either (b) or (c)**, please elaborate

SECTION 6: PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

61.(a) Does your school have a written policy on SEN? **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**, could we see a copy? **YES / NO**

62. What kinds of special educational needs are recognised?
Please tick all that apply:

i. Dyslexia **…..**
ii. Dyspraxia **…..**
iii. Partial Sighted **…..**
iv. Partial Hearing **…..**
v. Mobility Impaired **…..**
vi. Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties **…..**
vii. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder **…..**
viii. Autism/Asperger Syndrome **…..**
ix. Gifted & Talented **…..**
x. Other **…..**
(please specify)_____

63. How are the special educational needs of pupils identified and assessed?

64. How many pupils do you currently have at your school that are recognised as having SEN?

with statements* _____
* i.e. have a local authority statement of entitlement to support
What support are the statemented pupils entitled to?

without statements _____

65. (a) Is special provision made for SEN pupils? **YES / NO**

(b) **If Yes**, could you tell us about that provision?
Please tick all that apply:

i. In-class support **…..**
ii. Withdrawal for support **…..**
iii. Peripatetic support **…..**
iv. Teaching assistant dedicated to particular pupil **…..**
v. Dedicated unit (e.g. dyslexia) **…..**
vi. Other, please specify **…..**

_____

SECTION 7: ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

Organisation, Management, Governance, Finance

66. Who comprises membership of the Board of Trustees/Council of Management?
Please tick all that apply:

i. Teachers …..
ii. Parents/carers …..
iii. Friends of the school …..
iv. Any others …..
(please specify)_____

67. What responsibilities does the Board or the Council have?
Please tick all that apply:

i. Overall responsibility for the school …..
ii. Provision of means of support for educational provision (finance, legal and contractual matters, etc.) …..
iii. Management and organisation of the curriculum …..
iv. Admissions …..
v. Recruitment of teachers …..
vi. Oversee day-to-day running of school …..
vii. Fund-raising …..
viii. Oversee events organised by the school …..
ix. Other …..
(please specify)_____

68. (a) Are there any designated members of the Board who have particular responsibilities? **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**, please specify

69. (a) Is there a Teachers' College in your school? **YES / NO**

If yes: (b) what is discussed at these meetings?

(c) How well are these meetings attended?

(d) Does the school have any regular meetings which all teachers attend? **YES / NO**

If there are regular meetings,

(e) what is discussed at these meetings?

(f) How well are these meetings attended?

70. How is the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the teachers of the school organised?

Please tick all that apply:

i. Board of Trustees and College of Teachers meet together at designated times **…..**
ii. Trustees regularly meet representatives of teaching and administrative staff **…..**
iii. Teacher manager/College of Teachers chair person acts as link with Board **…..**
iv. Working groups which include Trustees and teachers/administrative staff **…..**
v. Other **…..**

(please specify)_____

71. How are leadership and management responsibilities shared and allocated within the school?

72. Do any designated teachers have special responsibilities? **YES / NO**

73. Do you feel that the responsibilities are fairly distributed throughout the school?

Yes – very
Yes – reasonably so
No – not really
Don't know

74. What are the benefits of organising the school as a Teachers' College?

75. (a) Are there any challenges running the school as a Teachers College? **YES / NO**

(b) **If yes**, please elaborate and explain how they are dealt with.

76. Are there subject or age-range specific meetings of teachers?

YES / NO
Don't know

77. Do you have an educational manager, or are yout thinking of appointing someone with this sort of role?

YES (have one)
YES (thinking of one)
NO

78. What are the school's sources of funding?
Please tick all that apply:

i. Fees **…..**
ii. Hiring out of building/facilities **…..**
iii. Fund-raising **…..**
iv. Gift aid **…..**
v. Other sources **…..**
(specify)_____

79. Which of these is / are the main source(s) of funding? Approximately, wWhat proportion of school income does the main source supply?

_____ ____%

80. How are decisions over the management and allocation of the school's budget made?

81. What areas in the school would benefit from greater funding?

Steiner Schools and the State sector

82. (a) Does this school take part in any exchanges or opportunities for mutual learning (involving pupils and/or teachers) with state schools, or has it done so in the past five years?

please circle all that apply:

i. Organised programme(s) **Current**

Has been one/some in the past

ii. ad hoc, individual initiatives **Current**

Has been one/some in the past

None

(b) **If there are or have been**, please elaborate

83. b) Would this school be interested in becoming part of the state sector of education? **YES**
NO
Not possible to say
Don't know

c) **I do not think teachers should presume to speak for parents on this issue. The question should be addressed to parents themselves unless you want to highlight any possible discrepency beween what teachers think parents think and what they actually do think!** What are the views of parents/carers on the question of becoming part of the public sector of education?

Mainly positive about joining the public sector
Mainly negative
Mixed
Don't know / unsure

(A questionnaire in Appendix B is available on separate sheets for distribution and completion by all teachers in the school. All replies will be strictly confidential.)

APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This overview (based on 'The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum', edited by Rawson & Richter, 2000) will be amended and developed in the light of the survey's findings

Class	maths	art	chemistry	crafts	English	Eurythmy	modern foreign languages	gardening	geography	history
1	number form drawing	painting drawing	integrated into life science curriculum	handwork (eg knitting, wood work)	speaking and listening writing reading	progressive learning of eurythmy	progressive learning of foreign language & appreciation of other culture	-	getting to know / feeling connected with surroundings, work of human beings	mythical and archetypal narrative
2	number form drawing	painting drawing	integrated into life science curriculum	as above	speaking and listening writing reading grammar	as above	as above	-	as above	as above
3	number form drawing measurement	painting drawing	integrated into life science curriculum	as above	as above	as above	as above	-	as above	as above
4	number measurement geometry	painting drawing clay modelling / sculpture	integrated into life science curriculum	as above	as above	as above	as above	-	local geography	first sense of history from local environment
5	number measurement geometry	as above	integrated into life science curriculum	as above	as above	as above	as above	-	farming and industry in partnership with nature	history as a subject
6	geometry algebra data	as above	integrated into life science curriculum	handwork (eg making 3-dimensional objects)	as above, essay writing introduced	as above	as above	basic practical activities woodland work	as above	history as a subject
7	geometry algebra data	as above	chemistry as a subject	handwork (eg leather-work)	as above	as above	as above	gardening woodland work	character & culture of other peoples	history as a subject
8	geometry algebra data	as above	chemistry as a subject	craft work using machines	as above	as above	as above	as above	as above	history as a subject
9	geometry trigonometry algebra	painting shaded drawing printing clay modelling / sculpture	chemistry as a subject	basket-making carpentry / joinery metalwork	English literature Strengthening of language skills	increasing experience of eurythmy as expressive form	as above	landscape gardening Building paths etc. propagation techniques caring for bushes/trees	developing understanding of earth as a whole and ecology	history as a subject
10	Geometry trigonometry algebra	as above	chemistry as a subject	dressmaking textile technology batik carpentry / joinery metalwork	as above	as above	as above	grafting	as above	history as a subject
11	Geometry trigonometry algebra	painting drawing clay modelling / sculpture	chemistry as a subject	weaving cardboard work / book-binding carpentry / joinery metalwork puppetry	as above	as above	as above	overlaps with environm-ental studies and ecology	as above	history as a subject
12	geometry Calculus integrals	painting drawing clay modelling / sculpture	chemistry as a subject	weaving cardboard work / bookbinding carpentry / joinery metalwork puppetry	as above + Class 12 play	as above	as above	as above	as above	history as a subject

Class	information technology	life sciences	movement	music	philosophy	physics	practical projects / work experience	social skills	Art / aesthetics	technology
1	-	stories of the living world	games, rhythm	singing, playing instruments	-	-	-	cultivation of these is integral to curriculum	-	-
2	-	as above	as above	as above	-	-	-	as above	-	-
3	-	as above, including creation stories	progression to more formal movement education	as above, and study of music	-	-	-	as above	-	-
4	-	observation and description of living world	progressive to further games, gymnastics, sports et.	as above	-	-	-	as above	-	-
5	-	as above, beginning zoology	as above	singing, instrumental lessons study of music	-	-	-	as above	-	-
6	-	zoology botany	as above	as above	-	physics as a subject	-	as above	-	-
7	-	human beings (e.g. health)	as above	as above	-	physics as a subject	-	as above, with social studies as a subject	-	-
8	computer introduced	human beings (e.g. health)	as above	as above	-	physics as a subject	-	as above	-	-
9	keyboard skills touch typing use of computers for information and communication	human biology and other life sciences (e.g. botany)	as above	study of music music theory concert visits singing, choir, orchestra	-	physics as a subject	agriculture practical first aid (or in Class 10)	as above, with life skills classes	art as a subject	-
10	as above	human biology and other life sciences (e.g. botany)	as above	as above	-	physics as a subject	surveying forestry work experience first aid	as above	art as a subject	Technology as a specific study, building on physics, chemistry, work experience
11	Understanding of how computers and programmes work	human biology and other life sciences (e.g. botany)	as above	as above	-	physics as a subject	work experience social practical, eg caring tasks in hospitals etc (or Class 12)	as above	art as a subject	as above
12	as above	holistic life science with focus on zoology as well as ecology etc.	as above	as above	Philosophy in main lesson as well as explored in other subjects	physics as a subject	social practical (eg caring tasks in hospitals etc) theatre practical art trip Class 12 project	as above	art as a subject	as above

APPENDIX B

This questionnaire is available on separate sheets for distribution and completion by all teachers in the school. All replies will be strictly confidential.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Anonymous questionnaire to teachers
on Steiner education and the state sector

1. a) Do you personally consider that it is a good idea or not for Steiner schools to become part of the state sector?

Yes
Open to exploring the idea
No

b) Why?

2. a) Do you think there are any challenges to Steiner education entering the state sector?

Yes / No / Not sure

b) If yes, what are these challenges?

c) Can these challenges be overcome?

Yes / No

d) If yes, how?

3. a) In your view, are there things that mainstream education can learn from Steiner education?

Yes / No

b) If Yes, what can mainstream education learn **most** from Steiner education?

4. a) In your view, are there things that Steiner education can learn from mainstream education?

Yes / No

b) If Yes, what are these?

We would be grateful for these background details:

i. Position:	class teacher / subject teacher
ii. Total years teaching in Steiner school(s)	…….. years
iii. Have you spent time teaching in a non-Steiner school?	Yes – in a UK state school Yes – other (please specify)…….. No
iv. Are you also a parent who has, or have had, a child attending a Steiner school?	Yes / No

For any of the above replies, please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

APPENDIX C

(to be completed by administrator)

Four Sections

C1. Pupils
C2. Parental Involvement
C3. Public Examinations
C4. Teachers and Other Teaching Staff

Please tick the appropriate reply where options are given in response to a question.

C1: PUPILS

1. Can you indicate the number of pupils in each class this academic year (2004/05)? If there is more than one class in a year please indicate each class separately, e.g.

Class	No. of classes in year	boys
K	2	9 / 12
1	3	8 / 10 / 9

Class	Number of classes in each year	boys	girls	Total
K				
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				

2. How many of your current pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds?

_____ (insert number) **Don't know**

3. How many of your pupils have English as an additional language or are bilingual learners?

_____ (insert number) **Don't know**

4. (a) Is pupil attendance a problem at your school?

Yes, it is a substantial issue **…..**
Yes, it is an issue **…..**
No, it is not an issue **…..**
Don't know **…..**

(b) **If yes**, what are the main reasons for absences?

Sickness/ medical appointments **…..**
Family holidays **…..**
No reason given **…..**
Any other, please specify **…..**

_____

5. Are class groups relatively stable throughout their life, or are there key times when pupils join or leave classes (for example, at the end of Class 5 when some parents might wish their children to begin Y7 in a maintained secondary school)?

Class groups are relatively stable **…..**
There are fluctuations during the years, but no clear patterns **…..**
There are fluctuations with clear patterns in class(es) **…..**

6. For the last academic year (2003/04):
(a) How many pupils joined the school by transfer from:

i. another Steiner school? **….. pupils**
ii. another independent school? **….. pupils**
iii. a state school? **….. pupils**

(b) How many left for:

i. another Steiner school? **….. pupils**
ii. another independent school? **….. pupils**
iii. a state school? **….. pupils**

7. Is this typical of preceding years?

Yes **…..**
No **…..**

8. How many teaching days are there in school year? **….. days**

9. (a) Does the school provide cooked meals for pupils?

Yes **…..**
No **…..**

(b) **If no**, how are pupils catered for?

Asked to bring lunch box **…..**
Pupils go home for lunch
Other arrangements made off premises **…..**
Other, please specify **…..**

_____

10. (a) Do you offer any concessionary places or places with no fees? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

(b) **If yes**, about how many for the current academic year (2004/05)? **concessionary** **….. places** **free** **….. places**

11. (a) Are there any admissions criteria for pupils? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

(b) **If yes**, can we have a copy of these? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

12. (a) Do you ever refuse admission to applicants? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

(b) **If yes**, how many times has this happened in the last five years **….. times**

(c) and for what reasons?

13. (a) Is the suitability of pupils for Steiner education re-assessed after they have started at the school? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

If yes: (b)When?

_____

(c) Are there set criteria? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

14. (a) Are pupils ever excluded? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

(b) **If yes**, how many in last academic year (2003/04)?

Permanent exclusions **….. (number)**
Temporary exclusions **….. (number)**

15. For what reasons might a pupil be excluded?

16. Would exclusion be considered an appropriate option for a pupil whose behaviour was significantly damaging the welfare of other pupils? **Yes** **…..** **No** **…..**

C2: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

17. Are parents/carers involved in any of the following ways?:

Please tick all that apply:

i.	parents evenings	…..
ii.	class meetings	…..
iii.	PTA	…..
iv.	as representatives on the Board of Trustees	…..
v.	giving administrative help	…..
vi.	maintenance of buildings, site and grounds / internal decoration	…..
vii.	classroom assistance, such as reading	…..
viii.	fund-raising activities	…..
ix.	plays	…..
x.	music	…..
xi.	camps	…..
xii.	transport	…..
xiii.	school trips	…..
xiv.	other, please specify	

_____

18. (a) Does the school have a procedure for dealing with concerns raised by a parent/carer? **Yes** ….. **No** …..

(b) **If yes**, can we have a copy of these? **Yes** ….. **No** …..

19. Who, in the school, is the first point of contact for parents/carers with a child in the school?

Class teacher …..
Administrator …..
Teacher manager …..
Other, please specify …..

_____

20. Does your school participate in the SWSF Code of Practice process? **Yes** ….. **No** …..

C3: PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS (GCSE, A LEVELS, OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES)

21. (a) Do you keep track of pupils who leave your school in order to study for public examinations (GCSE/A Level/NVQ etc.) in other institutions (e.g. maintained schools, other Steiner schools, other independent schools, FE colleges etc.)?

Yes …..
No …..
Partially (as and when we can) …..

(b) **If yes**, are you able to supply any data on the results obtained by those pupils?
Yes …..
No …..

GCSEs

SKIP Questions 22 to 28 if GCSEs not taught.

22. Which GCSEs were offered in the previous academic year (2003/04) for pupils to begin this term (Autumn 2004)? **Please list all offered, or attach the relevant information**.

23. What GCSEs are being taught in this academic year (2004/05)? (first and/or second year of the GCSE course). How many pupils are taking each one? How long is each course? **Please list all subjects in the grid and complete columns**.

(a) GCSE subjects being taught this academic year (2004/05)	(b) Number of pupils taking subject	(c) Length of course

24. What is the average number of GCSEs being taken by pupils studying for GCSEs this academic year (2004/05)? (Or, if preferred, please give us the information which will enable us to calculate this.) **….. (average per pupil)**

25. How many SEN pupils (with/without statements) are studying for GCSEs this academic year (2004/05)? **….. SEN pupils**

26. Are all pupils in a class entered for GCSE, or are there some who would remain at the school without taking examinations? **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

27. At what average age do pupils normally:
(a) begin their GCSE courses? **….. yrs of age**
(b) take GCSE examinations? **….. yrs of age**

28. What results were achieved in GCSE over the last five years? **Please complete the grids below or attach relevant information.**

2004

Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. of **A-C passes**	No. of boys with **A-C passes**	No. of girls with **A-C passes**

2003

Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. of **A-C passes**	No. of boys with **A-C passes**	No. of girls with **A-C passes**

2002

Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. of **A-C passes**	No. of boys with **A-C passes**	No. of girls with **A-C passes**

2001

Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. of **A-C passes**	No. of boys with **A-C passes**	No. of girls with **A-C passes**

2000

Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. of **A-C passes**	No. of boys with **A-C passes**	No. of girls with **A-C passes**

A levels

SKIP Questions 29 to 34 if A Levels not taught.

29. What A levels were offered in the previous academic year (2003/04) for pupils to begin this term (Autumn 2004)? **Please list all offered, or attach the relevant information**.

30. What A levels are being taught in this academic year (2004/05)? (first and/or second year of the A level course). How many pupils are taking each one? How long is each course? **Please list all subjects in the grid and complete columns**.

(a) A level subjects being taught this academic year (2004/05). **State if AS or A2 level.**	(b) Number of pupils taking subject	(c) Length of course

31. What is the average number of AS levels being taken by pupils studying for AS levels this academic year (2004/05)? What is the average number of A2s being taken by pupils studying for A2s this academic year (2004/05)? (Or, if preferred, please give us the information which will enable us to calculate this.)

….. (average ASs per pupil)
….. (average A2s per pupil)

32. (a) Do any pupils of sixth form age remain at the school without taking examinations? **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

(b) **If yes**, how many are currently at the school of sixth form age not studying for examinations? **….. pupils**

33. At what average age do pupils normally:

(a) begin their AS level courses? **….. yrs of age**
(b) take AS level examinations? **….. yrs of age**
(c) begin their A2 level courses? **….. yrs of age**
(d) take A2 level examinations? **….. yrs of age**

34. What results were achieved in AS/A2 (where appropriate) and A levels over the last five years?

2004

Subject	No.**entered** @**AS**			No. of **passes** with grade **AS**			No. **entered** @**A2**			No. of **passes** with grade **A2**		
	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls

2003

Subject	No.**entered** @**AS**			No. of **passes** with grade **AS**			No. **entered** @**A2**			No. of **passes** with grade **A2**		
	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls

2002

Subject	No.**entered** @**AS**			No. of **passes** with grade **AS**			No. **entered** @**A2**			No. of **passes** with grade **A2**		
	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls

2001

Subject	No.**entered** @**AS**			No. of **passes** with grade **AS**			No. **entered** @**A2**			No. of **passes** with grade **A2**		
	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls

2000

Subject	No.**entered** @**AS**			No. of **passes** with grade **AS**			No. **entered** @**A2**			No. of **passes** with grade **A2**		
	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls	total	boys	girls

Other Qualifications

SKIP Question 35 if this does not apply.

35. What results were achieved in other qualifications? (e.g. NVQ/GNVQ, food hygiene cert, DofE award, grade music exams?) **Please complete the grids below or attach relevant information.**

2004

Qualification/ Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. **passes** with grades where applicable	No. of boys **passing** with grades where applicable	No. of girls **passing** with grades where applicable

2003

Qualification/ Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. **passes** with grades where applicable	No. of boys **passing** with grades where applicable	No. of girls **passing** with grades where applicable

2002

Qualification/ Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. **passes** with grades where applicable	No. of boys **passing** with grades where applicable	No. of girls **passing** with grades where applicable

2001

Qualification/ Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. **passes** with grades where applicable	No. of boys **passing** with grades where applicable	No. of girls **passing** with grades where applicable

2000

Qualification/ Subject	Total **entered**	No. of boys **entered**	No. of girls **entered**	Total no. **passes** with grades where applicable	No. of boys **passing** with grades where applicable	No. of girls **passing** with grades where applicable

C4: TEACHERS AND OTHER TEACHING STAFF

36. Could you provide us with the following information on each teacher in the school.
NB. Names are not needed.

Type of teacher, i.e. class teacher or subject teacher	full- or part-time	subject (for subject teacher only)	when started at this school	when started Steiner teaching	Previous experience (teaching and other employment)	Qualifications: QTS? Steiner certtraining? Degree? Higher degree? Other (specify)	teacher training - institution(s) and years(s)

37. What pay scales are used in determining the salaries of teaching staff?

38. Is there a contracted number of hours to be worked by full-time teachers:

(a) annually?	**Yes**	**…..**
	No	**…..**
(b) weekly?	**Yes**	**…..**
	No	**…..**

39. What number of hours per week does a full-time teacher actually work?

….. hours
not possible to specify

40. Is the number of days in school specified for full-time teachers?

Yes **…..**
No **…..**

41. (a) Are teachers obliged to attend school on days when no pupils are present?

Yes **…..**
No **…..**

(b) **If yes**, on what occasions is this the case?

42. (a) Are INSET days provided by your school?

Yes **…..**
No **…..**

(b) **If yes**, how many INSET days are organised per year?

….. days

43. What level of statutory sick pay is provided?

44. (a) Is the government's teacher pension scheme used?

Yes **…..**
No **…..**

(b) **If yes**, how widely?

45. (a) Do teachers tend to use any other pension schemes?

Yes **…..**
No **…..**

(b) **If yes**, which?

46. Do teachers have the opportunity to attend short in-service courses?

(a) run by the Steiner movement **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

(b) run by other providers **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

(c) **If yes**, which providers?

47. (a) Do teachers have the opportunity to undertake further accredited study for their professional development? **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

If yes, (b) how would this take place?

(c) Is any financial support from the school available for this? **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

48. Are teachers encouraged to attend national and/or international conferences? **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

49. (a) Is membership of any professional associations encouraged/supported? **Yes** **…..**
No **…..**

(b) **If yes**, which?

50. Approximately how many teachers are members of a recognised trade union?

….. teachers

THANK YOU

APPENDIX 5

GCSE RESULTS, 2000-2004, SHOWING NUMBER OF PUPILS GAINING GRADE C OR BETTER AND (IN BRACKETS) NUMBER ENTERED

	Year	School V	School S	School R	School N	School M	School C	School D	School J	School L
Maths	2000	n/a	n/d	9 (14)	n/d	n/d	13 (27)	11 (16)	n/d	18 (22)
	2001	n/a	16 (23)	18 (20)	5 (9)	20 (30)	20 (28)	7 (9)	n/d	14 (14)
	2002	n/a	11 (13)	13 (19)	10 (16)	27 (28)	15 (24)	9 (12)	17 (17)	7 (10)
	2003	12 (17)	7 (17)	15 (17)	7 (11)	17 (24)	12 (19)	n/a	17 (21)	19 (29)
	2004	9 (11)	13 (15)	16 (21)	9 (15)	26 (28)	25 (35)	5 (6)	8 (14)	13 (17)June only
English Language	2000	n/a	n/d	11 (14)	n/d	n/d	27 (27)	n/d (16)	n/a	16 (18)
	2001	n/a	21 (23)	18 (21)	5 (9)	27 (30)	30 (30)	n/d (9)	n/a	12 (15)
	2002	n/a	13 (14)	18 (19)	13 (15)	26 (28)	26 (26)	n/d (12)	15 (16)	10 (10)
	2003	16 (16)[1]	11 (16)	15 (17)	10 (11)	21 (24)	18 (18)	n/d (11)	21 (21)	26 (28)[1]
	2004	9 (10)[1]	14 (15)	19 (21)	10 (15)	28 (28)	29 (33)	n/d (6)	11 (13)	17 (18)[1]
English Literaure	2000	n/a	n/d	8 (10)	n/d	n/a	26 (26)	11(16)	n/a	13(13)
	2001	n/a	20 (20)	12 (13)	6(8)	22 (23)	26 (28)	6 (8)	n/a	8 (8)
	2002	n/a	13 (13)	9 (11)	14 (15)	22 (22)	25 (26)	8 (12)	15 (18)	7 (7)
	2003	n/a	5 (7)	14 (14)	10 (11)	16 (16)	17 (18)	7 (11)	19 (21)	see Eng Lang
	2004	n/a	10 (12)	15 (18)	13 (15)	14 (15)	30 (32)	2 (6)	13 (13)	see Eng Lang
Double Science	2000	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/d	18 (27)	9 (16)	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	11 (17)	n/a	n/a	9 (13)	20 (29)	5 (9)	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	8 (9)	n/a	n/a	8 (11)	17 (26)	9 (12)	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	2 (7)	n/a	n/a	6 (8)	13 (20)	6 (10)	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	5 (8)	n/a	n/a	9 (12)	25 (32)	5 (6)	n/a	n/a
Single Science	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	12 (22)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	8 (9)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	2 (9)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	6 (6)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Biology	2000	n/a	n/a	3 (3)	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	8 (15)
	2001	n/a	n/a	8 (9)	n/a	2 (10)	n/a	n/a	n/a	7 (8)
	2002	n/a	n/a	7 (7)	n/a	3 (15)	n/a	n/a	n/a	3 (4)
	2003	n/a	n/a	8 (9)	n/a	3 (15)	n/a	1 (1)	n/a	7 (13)
	2004	n/a	n/a	10 (11)	n/a	5 (15)	n/a	n/a	n/a	9 (12)
Chemis-try	2000	n/a	n/a	7(9)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10(12)
	2001	n/a	n/a	11(15)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	14(14)
	2002	n/a	n/a	6(9)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5(9)
	2003	n/a	n/a	9(10)	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)	n/a	12(19)
	2004	n/a	n/a	9(11)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	9(10)
Physics	2000	n/a	n/a	5 (8)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	n/a	7 (8)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3 (3)
	2002	n/a	n/a	5 (5)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 (2)
	2003	n/a	n/a	10 (11)	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 (1)	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	n/a	6 (8)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7 (7)
ICT	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12 (14)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	17 (18)	n/a	n/a	n/a
French	2000	n/a	n/a	7(7)	n/a	n/a	11 (12)	6 (7)	n/a	3 (3)

	2001	n/a	4 (5)	15 (15)	n/a	9 (11)	15 (17)	0 (1)	n/a	7 (7)
	2002	n/a	8 (9)	9 (9)	n/a	10 (10)	13 (14)	0 (6)	8 (11)	2 (2)
	2003	12 (15)	0 (2)	9 (9)	n/a	10 (10)	12 (12)	2 (7)	15 (15)	23 (23)
	2004	7 (7)	3 (4)	8 (8)	n/a	19 (19)	16 (17)	1 (3)	10 (10)	5 (5)
German	2000	n/a	n/a	7 (7)	n/a	n/a	15 (15)	10 (13)	n/a	9 (9)
	2001	n/a	12 (16)	17 (17)	1 (1)	11 (12)	17 (17)	6 (9)	n/a	12 (12)
	2002	n/a	6 (6)	11 (11)	1 (1)	18 (19)	12 (12)	10(11)	4 (5)	9 (9)
	2003	9 (11)	3 (8)	14 (14)	n/a	7 (7)	10 (10)	7 (9)	n/a	26 (29)
	2004	7 (8)	6 (7)	13 (13)	1 (1)	9 (9)	22 (24)	5 (5)	n/a	18 (18)
Geo-graphy	2000	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	3 (3)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	n/a	1 (1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	1 (4)	3 (4)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	0 (1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
History	2000	n/a	n/a	7 (7)	n/d	n/d	4 (8)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	5 (6)	10 (10)	0 (1)	11(12)	11(11)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	11(12)	5 (7)	n/a	5 (5)	8 (9)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	6 (9)	10 (10)	n/a	n/a	4 (4)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	1(1)[2]	7 (9)	8 (13)	n/a	n/a	12 (19)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art	2000	n/a	n/a	7 (11)	n/a	n/a	23 (24)	3 (4)	n/a	21 (21)
	2001	n/a	n/a	13 (18)	n/a	n/a	20 (23)	7 (9)	n/a	12 (12)
	2002	n/a	n/a	12 (15)	n/a	n/a	15 (20)	9 (10)	n/a	6 (6)
	2003	12 (17)	n/a	6 (10)	n/a	n/a	11(15)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	7 (10)	n/a	9 (14)	n/a	n/a	12 (12)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art-Painting	2000	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8 (8)	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	6 (6)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	5 (5)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	4 (4)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art-3D	2000	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	5 (6)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	4 (4)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	6 (8)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	8 (8)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art-Textiles	2000	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	9 (9)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	7 (7)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	4 (5)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	n/a	7 (7)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art & Design	2000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	9 (9)	n/a	n/a	10 (10)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	24 (24)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	21 (22)	n/a	6 (10)	n/a	13 (13)
	2004	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	28 (28)	n/a	2 (6)	n/a	6 (7)
Music	2000	n/a	n/a	6 (6)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2001	n/a	n/a	9 (10)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2002	n/a	n/a	11 (12)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2003	n/a	n/a	2 (2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2004	5 (5)	n/a	6 (6)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Other GCSE subjects			Physical Education: 2001	Graphic Communic-ation: 2001 2002 2003 2004	Media Studies: 2002	Art & Design (short): 2001 2002 2003 Drama: 2001 2002 2003 200404 Design & Technology:	English (speaking & listening): 2000 2002 Dutch: 2003 2004 Spanish: 2004 Information	Art (short): 2000 2002 Art & Design (short): 2003		Spanish: 2002

						2001 2002 2003 2004 Information Studies: 2001 2002	Studies: 2000 2001 2002			

Notes: n/a = not applicable, i.e. pupils not entered for this, or subject not offered for GCSE study, in that year.
n/d = no data supplied.

1. Subject described as 'English' (not specified as English language or literature).
2. This was a 'private' entry.

APPENDIX 6

A LEVEL RESULTS, 2000-2004, SHOWING NUMBER OF PUPILS PASSING AND (IN BRACKETS) NUMBER ENTERED

		School M					School C					School L				
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Maths	AS	n/d	1(1)	n/d	3(3)	n/a	n/d	n/a	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	2(2)	2(3)	3(3)	3(6)
	A2	n/d	6(6)	n/d	n/a	1(1)	n/d	1(2)	n/a	4(4)	n/a	1(1)	n/a	1(1)	n/a	n/a
English	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/d	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)	4(4)	n/a	15(15)	10(10)
Literature	A2	n/d	7(7)	n/d	8(8)	4(4)	2(2)	1(1)	5(5)	7(8)	5(5)	5(5)	n/a	9(9)	2(2)	10(10)
Chemistry	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3(3)	5(5)	4(4)	5(7)
	A2	n/d	3(3)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3(3)	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Physics	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/d	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2(2)	1(1)	1(1)	2(4)
	A2	n/d	2(2)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)	1(1)	6(6)	1(1)	n/a	n/a	1(1)	1(1)	n/a
Biology	AS	n/d	1(1)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/d	3(3)	n/a	2(2)	n/a	n/a	1(1)	2(2)	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/d	3(3)	n/d	2(2)	2(2)	1(1)	3(3)	2(2)	3(3)	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Environmental	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2(3)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Science	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Geology	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5(5)	n/a	4(4)
	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
French	AS	n/d	1(1)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/d	3(3)	n/a	n/a	n/a	2(2)	1(1)	1(1)	3(3)	1(3)
	A2	n/d	1(1)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)	1(1)	3(3)	1(1)	n/a	1(1)	n/a	n/a	1(1)
German	AS	n/d	1(1)	n/d	1(1)	n/a	n/d	3(3)	n/a	n/a	n/a	4(4)	1(1)	4(4)	4(4)	5(5)
	A2	n/d	3(3)	n/d	1(1)	2(2)	1(1)	2(2)	3(3)	4(4)	1(1)	n/a	3(3)	2(2)	n/a	4(4)
Dutch	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)	n/a	3(3)	n/a	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Japanese	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)	1(1)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	2(2)	1(1)	n/d	7(7)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/d	n/a	n/d	5(5)	5(5)	n/a	4(4)	3(3)	9(9)	1(1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art:	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2(2)	n/a	1(1)	n/a
critical studies	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)
Art:	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12(12)	14(14)
fine art	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7(7)
History of Art	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/d	n/a	n/d	6(6)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Drama	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	n/a	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/d	3(3)	n/d	8(8)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Performance	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3(3)	n/a	8(8)	8(9)
Studies	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5(5)
Music	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2(2)	n/a	3(3)	3(3)
	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2(2)
Art & Design	AS	n/d	2(2)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0(1)	2(2)	7(9)	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/d	3(3)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8(8)	4(4)	5(5)	n/a	n/a
Design and	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	1(1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Technology	A2	n/d	n/a	n/d	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
History	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/d	2(2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3(3)	n/a	4(4)
	A2	n/d	5(6)	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1(1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sociology	AS	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3(3)	2(2)	4(4)
	A2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5(5)	n/a
General Studies	AS	n/d	n/a	n/d	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	A2	n/d	n/a	n/d	1(1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

n/a = not applicable, i.e. pupils not entered for this, or subject not offered for A level study, in that year.
n/d = no data supplied.

APPENDIX 7

EXAMPLE OF MORNING VERSES AS RECITED IN ONE SCHOOL

Classes 1 - 4	Classes 5 - 8
The sun with loving light *Makes bright for me each day* *The soul with spirit power* *Gives strength unto my limbs* *In sunlight shining clear* *I meditate oh God* *That strength and grace and skill* *For learning and for work* *In me may grow and live*	*I look into the world* *Wherein there shines the sun* *Wherein there gleam the stars* *Wherein there lie the stones.* *The plants they live and grow* *The beasts they feel and live* *And man to spirit gives* *A dwelling in his soul* *That living dwells in me* *God's spirit lives and weaves* *In light of sun and soul* *In heights of world without* *In depths of soul within* *To thee, oh spirit of God* *I seeking turn myself* *That strength and grace and skill* *For learning and for work* *In me may live and grow*

APPENDIX 8

RELIGION LESSONS: EXTRACT FROM SCHOOL R'S HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS, NOVEMBER, 2004

Religion lessons are given weekly and are Christian-based. Every care is taken to avoid dogmatism or sectarianism. The Christian impulse at the heart of Rudolf Steiner's insights forms the guidelines for the teacher.

Much of the content of the early years (classes 1 to 4) follows the rhythms of the seasons and festivals. The child feels at one with his or her surroundings. Nature parables with their pictures of morality, or of the worlds of spirit behind material things, form the content of these lessons. For example, the story of the caterpillar turning into a butterfly can give to the children a picture of the immorality of the human spirit. The essential point is to convey the wonder of the world and a mood of reverence. The appeal is to the children's natural feeling for realities hidden behind the appearance of things. 'Heaven lies about us in our infancy.'

From the age of ten to fourteen, children sense their growth isolation from the world around the and their growing self-hood reveals itself, and towards the end of this period, as an unconscious element their inner beings, children begin to say, 'I wish to choose my own way.'

During these years the New Testament stories of the Gospels is one strand of the lesson content. The children should be familiar with the life of the Christ and should know some of the great, archetypal parables, such as the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. Up to about thirteen years these stories are accepted uncritically – the appeal is to the hearts of children and not their heads.

At thirteen, children begin to sense inner loneliness and often harbour powerful but hidden feelings. At this age, stirrings stories of heroic lives form the content of much of the religion lessons. The idealism of this age and the search for self-worth are met by biographies of people like Helen Keller, Albert Schweitzer, Ernest Shackleton and Martin Luther King.

It is a fundamental principle to hold images of the nobility of human striving before the eyes and hearts of children, and not the negative images of destruction, death or evil.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime."

In classes 9 to 11, the teaching is based on the principle of understanding, drawing on the pupil's growing capacity for thinking. The difference between each year is clearly recognised and the teaching is thus appropriate for each age, so that the feelings and the will are engaged to the full, making possible an awakening of the Spirit.

In class 9, the pupils are often strongly aware of the world in which they live, and are concerned about social issues. The life of Saint Paul can be used as an example of idealism, of a new social and spiritual awareness. Modern stories of conversion can also be looked at. Appropriate too are stories of struggle in modern society, of overcoming prejudice, of fighting for a cause – subjects which stir the feelings and stimulate thinking – as also are accounts of after-death experiences, which stimulate feelings about immorality.

In class 10, the heart of the Upper school, the teaching relates to a new capacity for loving. The theme of love can be treated directly through various modern works, and also through an understanding of the spirit of Christianity and the deeds of Christ. A great number of stories have this message without being sentimental.

In class 11, the pupil is becoming more inwardly aware and has the strongly developed capacity for independent thinking. The Parzival theme of quest, of testing life with questions and wrestling with thoughts on life's problems can provide the substance for discussion at this age. A major part of the lessons in class 11 is dedicated to a study of comparative religion.

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